The German Tribune

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Bonn and Paris agree over nuclear exports

Handelsblatt
DEUTSCHE WIRTSCHAFTSZEITUNG

President Giscard d'Estaing and Chancellor Helmut Schmidt conferred in private for two hours on 3 February in Paris before being joined the following day by Premier Raymond Barre and the Ministers of Foreign and Home Affairs, Economic Affairs, Finance and Research for their routine half-yearly consultations.

Was the Franco-Federal Republic summit merely a routine encounter, as was generally assumed? It was not.

Serious observers of the international scene emphasis that this latest exchange of views between the President and the Chancellor has led for the first time to a harmonisation of the two governments' response to pressure from Washington to which both are being subjected.

Franco-Federal République consultations have been part and parcel of the European scene for the past fourteen years. Views and policy towards the United States have always been the fundamental bone of contention between the two countries.

This is the first time the two governments have reached agreement on what is a crucial aspect of foreign policy. What is more, for once the French attitude towards Washington, which since General de Gaulle's days has traditionally been intransigent, now appears to be more conciliatory than Bonn's, which the French have traditionally rated too pro-American.

The two leaders have not, of course, agreed on a joint Franco-Federal Republic reaction to US moves, but M. Giscard d'Estaing and Herr Schmidt nonetheless issued a joint declaration on exports of nuclear technology.

In this declaration they emphasised the intention of their respective countries to help Third World customers by continuing to export technology and industrial installations.

One can but assume that the two governments have finally abandoned their fruitless disputes over whether Europe should be Atlantic or European in orientation and concentrated instead on constructive talks.

These talks will need, of course, to be continued, but in the French capital they are certainly seen as an indication that harmonisation of Franco-Federal Republic viewpoints is in the offing at last on the controversial topic of relations with the United States.

Another surprise of the Franco-Federal Republic summit was the French leader's desire to make a fresh attempt to get down to brass tacks on EMU, the proposed European economic and monetary union.

Chancellor Schmidt, who was unstinting in his praise of French Premier Raymond Barre's efforts to stabilise the economy, based as they have been on free market principles, could hardly carp at M. Giscard d'Estaing's renewed desire to breathe fresh life into European integration.

The Chancellor rated the new moves in Paris as part of a greater coordination of economic policies and economic policy targets. With this objective in view Franco-Federal Republic consultations are now to be held every three months and not, as hitherto, twice a year.

Extending economic policy "convergence", as it is called, to all members of the Nine (or at least to those who are in a position to toe the line) by the end of the year is an ambitious target.

The outcome of close Franco-Federal Republic cooperation on economic policy may possibly serve to pave the way.

Prior to the summit the French Press was strident in its calls for this country to take on a more active role in fostering economic expansion. To judge by oficial communiqués the Chancellor did not even snap at the bait.

The problem is evidently more than a mere bilateral one, Washington also having encouraged Bonn to boost the home economy more vigorously.

France certainly hopes that more intensive consultations and the degree of agreement on economic issues that arose from the talks between Chancellor Schmidt and Premier Barre will serve to facilitate both understanding and joint progress in economic policy.

Gustav Ferber
(Handelsblatt, 7 February 1977)



West German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt (left) and Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher (right) enjoying a meal with French President Giscard d'Estaing in the Elysee Palace. (Photo: dpa)

IN THIS ISSUE

President Hillery visits Bonn



Irish President Patrick Hillery visited Bonn as a "friend of Germany and a European." His was an official State visit designed to foster and maintain what have traditionally been good relations between this country and the Irish Republic.

There are certainly no bilateral problems outstanding in ties between the two countries. Decades ago the Irish came to regard Germany as a natural counterweight to an inordinately one-sided dependence on Britain.

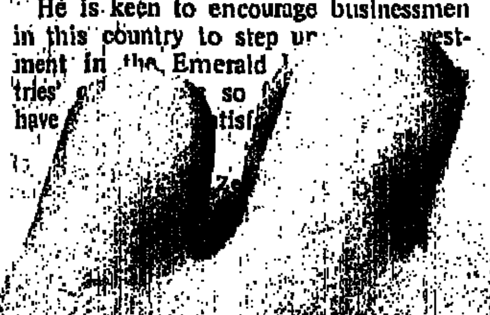
Relations may not always have been plain sailing in the past, but the fact remains that Germany and Ireland retain a lasting feeling of mutual sympathy.

What is more, there are political parallels between the two. Eighty per cent of the Irish electorate welcomed the decision to join the Common Market because EEC membership loosened the bonds of dependence on Whitehall and paved the way for interdependence within a wider framwork,

As Foreign Minister, Dr Hillery was particularly keen on accession to the Common Market. He rated his visit to Bonn as a markedly European event, since in his view State visits of this kind must demonstrate continuity in the desire to bring about European integration.

The Irish President will nonetheless have taken the opportunity presented by his visit to this country to do more than engage in political talks and diplomatic representation.

He is keen to encourage businessmen in this country to step up [illegible] investment in the Emerald [illegible] tries' [illegible] so [illegible] have [illegible] tisf[illegible]





Irish President Patrick Hillery is welcomed in Bonn by the Federal Republic President Walter Scheel and his wife Mildred (Photo: Sven Simon)

■ FOREIGN AFFAIRS

East-West talks on troop cuts resume

Delegates from nineteen countries reconvened in Vienna on 3 February for a fresh round on MBFR talks on Nato and Warsaw Pact troop cuts in Central Europe. They did so against a background of more strident tones to the East-West dialogue than for some time.

The climate of political opinion is far from being ideally suited to the purpose of disarmament, with influential circles in the West advocating an intensified Nato arms build-up to counteract alleged Soviet supremacy.

These selfsame circles are particularly insistent in their warnings to the West not to make prior concessions on troop cuts.

In point of fact both the Warsaw Pact and Nato have of late stepped up their strike capacity. The arms race continues at all levels.

Yet the prospects of a settlement have improved. A number of Western governments have resolved to break the MBFR deadlock by taking over responsibility for the conduct of negotiations from the military.

Agreement is indeed an unlikely prospect as long as staff officers are allowed to sink their teeth into minor details. Talks so far have, mind you, been far from useless. Valuable preliminaries have been conducted and problems analysed.

One major success notched up last year was that the Warsaw Pact for the first time ever saw fit to disclose figures relating to armed forces stationed in the area the Vienna troop cut talks are intended to cover.

These are the two German States, the Benelux countries, Poland and Czechoslovakia, agreement not having been reached on the inclusion of Hungary.

The West has 777,000 soldiers stationed in Central Europe as thus defined, while the East bloc has 927,000 troops stationed on its side of the Iron Curtain, or so Nato sources claim.

The Warsaw Pact disputes the accuracy of these figures. After lengthy hesitation, the Soviet delegate submitted figures according to which some 800,000 men are stationed in the eastern part of the troop cut zone.

This would mean that arithmetically East and West are more or less in balance and that the two sides could go ahead and reduce troop strengths by equal numbers.

In the past Nato has called for asymmetrical cuts in order to bring about a manpower maximum of about 700,000 on both sides. This time round MBFR delegates will be trying to agree on facts and figures.

Experts will attempt to reach agreement on uniform criteria. Armed forces nowadays have so many attached support staff and personnel that it is no easy task to define who is to count as a soldier.

East bloc tank superiority is another bone of contention. The Warsaw Pact allegedly has 15,000 tanks to the West's 6,000, but this difference is not regarded by Nato Defence Ministers as being crucial.

Nato, they argue, does not want to threaten the Warsaw Pact, so it does not need to draw level in respect of offensive capacity.

Nato does, on the other hand, need suitable defence weapons of appropriate quality. Nato is in the process of being fitted out with the latest in anti-tank armour.

The MBFR, or mutual balanced force reduction, talks are not a playground for the military; they are first and foremost a political undertaking. This is a fact the East bloc has been quicker to note than the West.

Warsaw Pact proposals are all aimed at one target, that of containing possible efforts by Bonn to achieve hegemony within either Nato or the Common Market.

Thus the Bundeswehr, which is already the most powerful conventional army in Western Europe, must be contained. The East bloc is opposed to the Nato concept of the two pacts agreeing to "collective" troop ceilings.

In order to make sure that troop cuts do not just entail a reduction in Belgian and Dutch troop strengths the East bloc has called for agreed "national" ceilings for each and every country.

Western governments ought not to be overhasty in passing judgment. The East bloc proposals may be unacceptable in their present form, but agreement might yet be reached.

As they stand the Warsaw Pact proposals would establish double standards in both Nato and the Common Market, some countries being required to disarm, others not. Nato integration would certainly be hampered.

Yet even in the West this country's military strength gives rise to friction, and in the final analysis what matters at the MBFR talks is to prevent war. Mutual security must be maintained as inexpensively as possible.

Pierre Simonitsch

(Frankfurter Rundschau, 4 February 1977)

West must show restraint at Belgrade talks

Diplomats in a number of capitals have it in writing that Chancellor Schmidt and Premier Callaghan agreed at Chequers not to make the Belgrade conference to review the Helsinki agreement a tribunal at which the East bloc is pilloried.

Whitehall and Bonn went on to follow the same line at the London talks of EEC Foreign Ministers held to outline details of political cooperation. They advocated circumspection and did so secure in the knowledge that they have a Common Market majority behind them.

So are the Nine about to disembowel themselves politically in Belgrade merely because the West might otherwise be at the receiving end of undesirable repercussions if the communist countries were to be vilified at the conference as contemptuous of human rights and civic freedoms?

For months democratic nations have been reminding the East bloc that it is a party to Basket Three of the CSCE agreement, undertaking to step up the exchange of information and ideas and to facilitate travel between the countries of Europe.

Unrest is on the increase in Eastern Europe. In the wake of Berlin in 1953, Poland and Hungary in 1956, Czechoslovakia in 1968 and Danzig in 1970/71 a sixth wave of civic rights protest against communist rule is gaining momentum.

Since the Warsaw Pact invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968 the West has appreciated that Moscow has no compunction in using force to put such movements to a summary end if need be.

This is why Western Europe is right to exercise restraint. Dissidents did after all, seem to have greater leeway in the East bloc than they used to have.

"Under Stalin he would have been shot without further ado for what he said," someone who recently telephoned Soviet physicist Andrei Sakharov commented.

If the democratic nations are going to pillory the East bloc in public on human rights and the Helsinki agreement the current wave of unrest in Eastern Europe will be crushed inexorably as its predecessors have been.

This may well happen even if Western Europe manages to control itself and refrains from pointing an accusing finger at the East.

Concern for civil rights champions in Eastern Europe must not, of course, make the West end up by sharing the anxiety no doubt felt by East bloc governments.

One can but hope that the Nine, who are preparing to speak with one voice within Nato, will catalogue a serviceable list of demands to be levelled at the East.

The Belgrade conference must on no account end up being a mere dry summary of the Helsinki pledges that have been fulfilled.

Silence is not called for in the context of East Berlin checking the identity of callers at the Bonn mission who enquire about exit visa application procedures.

Canada has complained that many of the refugees from Eastern Europe to which it has offerd a new home are still waiting for their families to join them.

Nato has called on the Warsaw Pact to specify the rights of manoeuvre observers; so far Western observers have been allowed to see next to nothing of communist manoeuvres.

Norway has called for a reduction in the number of troops involved in a manoeuvre of which advance notice must be given from 25,000 to 12,000.

The Belgrade conference will certainly not be a gathering at which the West can bask in fresh illusions of detente, but it must also not become a treadmill at which hundredweights of documents are milled around for months to no effect.

Hermann Bohle

(Kieler Nachrichten, 1 February 1977)

EEC forges new trade links with the Arab world

The Common Market has brought its Mediterranean policy to a virtual conclusion, and with it a venture into world affairs that has gone virtually unnoticed by public opinion.

The EEC has concluded with Egypt, Syria and Jordan treaties on economic, technological and financial cooperation. Export restrictions are to be relaxed and Common Market countries will participate in the industrialisation of the signatory countries.

Substantial sums of money are involved. The three Middle Eastern countries are to be granted credit facilities totalling 780 million deutschmarks, repayable up to forty years and at interest rates of as low as one per cent.

The European Community has already concluded similar arrangements with Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia and, albeit on a different basis, with Mauretania, Somalia and Sudan.

Terms are still being negotiated with Lebanon, talks having been protracted on account of the civil war there.

The common denominator of all these treaties is that the countries concerned are all members of the Arab League, a grouping of twenty countries that between them constitute the EEC's foremost market.

Last year the Common Market exported more goods to the Arab world than to the United States and Japan combined, and the viability of the Common Market countries depends in its turn on oil supplies from the Middle East.

Three years after the oil embargo the Common Market countries have demonstrated that they are able to make a clear distinction between moral judgments and the exigencies of *realpolitik*.

The Arab countries have demonstrated for their part that in politics the end may justify the means.

Relations between Europe and the Arab world have thus been reorientated and the prospects have seldom been so promising, with both sides talking in terms of friendship.

This ought to facilitate a solution of problems that are still outstanding. The next round of talks on large-scale economic cooperation between Europe and the Arab world is being held in Tunis. One of the items on the agenda will be long-term safeguards to meet European energy requirements.

In Paris the next round of North-South talks will shortly gather together

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■ POLITICS

SPD conference ends on an indecisive note

The Social Democratic Party conference fell disappointingly flat and the general reaction was one of suppressed dissatisfaction. No decision was reached about definite lines of action for the future. And the expected impressive speeches about new unity in the party after the recent "healthy disputes" also failed to materialise.

SPD members in fact went away united in support for their party, but unable to agree as to the course it should adopt.

In retrospect, all this is fairly understandable. Originally the conference was to be held to discuss the party's plans for the new parliamentary term.

But because of the pensions crisis this was postponed and the conference developed instead into a solacing session for Chancellor Helmut Schmidt and the Social Democratic Party. Firmly ignoring the "issue" and resolutely concentrating on the future, the SPD marked time.

All the same the conference was not altogether a waste of time. The new SPD business manager Egon Bahr, former Minister for Economic Cooperation chalked up a considerable success there — not least because as an "outsider" no one was expecting too much of him.

Outsider or no outsider, he certainly knew how to get through to SPD members. In any case parliamentary party-leader Herbert Wehner enthused over Herr Bahr's speech afterwards as if he had suddenly found a long-lost son.

It was important for Herr Bahr to make a success of his appearence at this conference. He will need all the respect and trust he has earned so far when it comes to reorganising the party.

If reorganisation is to be successful and effective enough it will necessarily be a somewhat painful business, since the personnel reorganisation now planned is going to cut deeply into old loyalties and long-established hierarchies.

At the conference it also became evident that the Social Democrats are still absolutely in favour of the Bonn Social Democrat/Free Democrat Coalition — however much they may be grousing.

However, the Free Democrats will have to work hard to win over the SPD fully again. And the SPD in Bonn will have to justify every concession it makes to FDP proposals and views far more often and more convincingly from now on — despite the Chancellor's enthusiasm over the SPD/FDP team and Herr Brandt's and Herr Wehner's pressing arguments as to why the coalition is still necessary.

Criticism of the FDP is of course tied up with uncertainty as to SPD leadership and doubts as regards the effectiveness of the present economic system. The SPD can take the pensions issue more or less in its stride, although the electorate's faith in the Government is likely to be shaken for some time.

But long-term unemployment on the present scale will be too much for the party to take if it is not totally convinced that the Government has done everything humanly possible to reduce the unemployment quota.

The vast majority of SPD members is for giving unemployment priority over all other problems. Erhard Eppler stressed at the conference that extra personnel costs should not be allowed to interfere with schemes for public investment since it is better to "pay people for doing something constructive for society than to pay them for doing nothing for society."

And Trades Unions Council president Hein-Oskar Vetter put forward his view that the Government investment programme should be doubled to 20,000 million deutschmarks.

Herr Schmidt, however, felt that "It is pointless to range full employment so high above all other aims as to ignore that any other problems exist." He asked Herr Vetter how he proposed that a 20,000 million investment programme could be financed without sending interest rates on the stock market soaring.

He said firmly that extra costs for employing people in the public sector were out of the question if this entailed financing through loans.

Where Herr Schmidt spoke only in general terms about the economy, Herr Vetter found instant approval among SPD members for his declaration that "The overall market economy policies that have been pursued up to now must be strengthened and improved by a more progressive industrial development policy and research programmes."

Herr Wehner realised that the SPD could be running into danger here and warned party members to avoid expressing themselves "in such a way as to offer others the opportunity of picking up our ideas and making out that they were the ones who were really interested in improving and developing the market." The debate about unemployment made it clear that, as in other areas of the economy, the SPD is no longer prepared to trust blindly to traditional methods of dealing with economic crises.

This is not, as has been suggested, a battle between realists and idealists. Everyone is far more concerned that the right steps be taken. The Chancellor and his party are treating each other with extreme respect. But this barely conceals the fact that real understanding between them is not all that might be desired.

Rolf Zundel

(Die Zeit, 4 February 1977)

Little chance of a Grand Coalition

None of the parties is quite sure where it stands with the others at the moment. Speculation is rife as to possible split-ups of existing coalitions and even a major coalition involving all the parties.

Interestingly enough the public in general has shown itself to be opposed to the idea of a Grand Coalition.

Opposition leader Helmut Kohl regards a Grand Coalition as an emergency measure only, and even then acceptable only if all parties are involved.

As far as SPD chairman Willy Brandt is concerned the whole question is of no consequence at present. And Christian Social chairman Franz Josef Strauss is "steadfastly opposed to a Grand Coalition under the existing circumstances."

Lower Saxony Minister of Finance Leisler Kiep sees no good reason for taking such a step. And FDP politician Otto Graf Lambsdorff is taking comfort in the observation that the SPD members in favour of a Grand Coalition are not in any position of particular importance or influence.

The public's present attitude towards a major Coalition is born of past political experience. When the Federal Republic was founded Konrad Adenauer had to go to considerable lengths to bring in even a CDU/FDP Coalition.

And in 1966, somewhat uneasily, the Grand Coalition was set up with the SPD, CDU and CSU. It was to be the only Coalition. The fact that with a mini-Opposition between 1966 and 1969 the extreme left and right wing groups outside the Bundestag grew considerably has made a lasting impression. And at the moment there are no signs that feelings are beginning to change on this score.

(Süddeutsche Zeitung, 25 January 1977)

FDP wants to improve its image

The Free Democratic Party has more or less been riding out the pensions storm under the lee of its big brother, the Social Democratic Party.

Rather than taking its fair share of reponsibility and blame for this highly damaging issue at the start of the new parliamentary term, it has sat back to let the SPD take the worst of the buffeting from the public.

But it may simply be trying to gather strength for the undoubtedly hard year ahead. The election result (7.9 per cent) of 3 October was certainly nothing much to write home about.

What is more, criticism from the Social Democrats that the SPD has been giving way too much to the FDP has increased. And disputes are also rising in the FDP's own ranks over the relevance and usefulness of a coalition with the Christian Democrats in Lower Saxony and, shortly, in the Saar.

So party leaders have decided the time has come to make a concerted effort to improve the party's image and make it more distinctly independent. The party is to be completely reorganised. The party programme, which is still a bit on the spare side, will be filled out more. And all this, it is hoped, will attract more members and voters.

FDP party chairman Hans-Dietrich Genscher has put one of his best men on the job of reorganising the party, thirty-two year old Günter Verheugen. Until the end of 1976 Herr Verheugen was a senior civil servant in the Foreign Office and Herr Genscher's chief adviser. On 1 January this year he became FDP business manager.

Herr Verheugen believes that the FDP has a big future. He says that the CDU and SPD already have about ninety per cent of their potential votes, whereas the FDP can still make a lot of headway here.

"Last year membership increased by 8.5 per cent to 78,000, but we can still improve quite a bit on this figure," he says.

A survey has been started among FDP members in order to find out the party's main strengths and weaknesses. The questions are designed to bring to light weaknesses in the party's organisation and ways in which individual party members can work more effectively for their party. A similar survey among FDP sympathisers is intended to come up with important data for attracting new members.

Herr Verheugen is labouring under no illusions that reorganisation — however late in the day — is the FDP's recipe for instant success.

The party must sharpen up its public image. It will only gain an appreciable extra number of voters and members when it stands quite apart from all other parties with its own distinctive policies and programme.

Individuality is a consideration of growing importance for the larger parties, the SPD and CDU/CSU. But for the FDP it is literally a question of survival.

In the sixties the FDP was able to win the support of new sectors of the electorate with its proposals concerning detente and the *Ostpolitik* and progressive educational schemes. Today it has to look around for new and more promising fields of action.

It cannot hope to survive simply by negatively opposing other competitors in the political market. The slogan of the late Secretary General of the FDP Karl-Hermann Flach, "against conservative torpidity and socialist Utopia" will cut no ice in the eighties.

And the FDP' claim to represent "common sense" in the Federal Republic has so far been regarded more or less as a mere publicity line to some extent justifiable by the certainly admirable achievements of successful liberal politicians such as Walter Scheel, Werner Maihofer, Hans Friderichs and Hans-Dietrich Genscher.

Those who are impatient to hear about the FDP's new programme, those who are no longer content with the FDP's old line of thought and action are now being soothed with the "review commission" led by Werner Maihofer and the economic commission led by Hans Friderichs.

The work of these commissions is now almost complete. And now, after lengthy discussions the material they have collected is being systemmatically sorted.

Their findings are to be submitted to Herr Genscher by the spring and will be the basis of a draft for a programme. This will then be decided upon finally at the FDP party conference in Kiel in November.

Günter Geschke

(Deutsches Allgemeines Sonntagsblatt, 6 February 1977)

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developing countries, commodity exporters and the industrialised world to define a new international economic order.

With a view to speeding up the Paris talks Europe may be able to lend another helping hand, and more particularly this country, albeit unofficially.

Former US Defence Secretary Robert S. McNamara, president of the World Bank, has suggested that former Bonn Chancellor Willy Brandt, the Nobel peace prize-winner who now heads both this country's Social Democratic Party and the Socialist International, act as an intermediary.

Representatives of both industrialised and Third World governments reckon Willy Brandt could succeed in outlining to all concerned the other sides' interest and thus in paving the way for compromise.

"Honest brokers you can trust have grown few and far between," one Arab delegation noted at the signing ceremony in Brussels. "If there still is one he ought to be sent for."

(Vorwärts, 3 February 1977)

■ PEOPLE

Heinrich Geissler nominated as new CDU secretary-general

Kölner Stadt-Anzeiger

Pugnacious Heinrich Geissler, 46, at present Minister for Social Affairs in the state cabinet of the Rhineland-Palatinate, has been nominated as the new secretary-general of the CDU by party chairman Helmut Kohl.

The nomination was announced at a recent conference of the CDU executive committee. Heinrich Geissler will thus succeed Kurt Biedenkopf who resigned recently.

Geissler is reputed to enjoy crossing swords with the opposition and winding up in a clinch. On one occasion, when the SPD Member of Parliament Julius Lehlbach compared him with Cassius Clay, Geissler had his press office issue a press release saying that Clay was not only considered the greatest, but also the fairest fighter.

Geissler is anything but a man to use kid gloves when dealing with a hotly-disputed issue.

But even in disputes within his own party, Heinrich Geissler, who has been a member of the CDU's social affairs committees ever since the publication of his doctoral thesis, by no means treads gingerly.

In his thesis which dealt with the rights of conscientious objectors in accordance with Article 4 of the Constitution, Geissler arrived at the controversial conclusion that the Constitution protected any form of decision based on one's conscience.

His commitment in the social affairs committees has earned him the reputation of being a "red" within the ranks of the CDU.

Geissler, the father of three sons, became interested in politics while studying law. Initially, he was the chairman of the Ring of Christian Democratic Students at Tübingen University and was subsequently elected chairman of the socalled Young Union in Baden-Württemberg.

In 1965, Geissler, then aged 35, was elected a member of the Bundestag for the Reutlingen district.

After two years in the Bundestag he was, as he himself put it, "greatly disappointed."

Determined not to waste the best years of his life in the Bundestag, he gladly accepted when Helmut Kohl, whom he had known since his student days, offered him his present cabinet post in Mainz. And, as he recently put it, "I have never regretted this decision."

Herr Geissler, who would have celebrated his tenth anniversary as Minister for Social Affairs next May, is not only considered a fighter, but is also known as a man who is ready to roll up his sleeves and lend a hand at the drop of a hat.

At the height of the energy crisis, when Sunday driving was banned, he peddled 15 miles in order attend a party rally, undeterred by the bitter cold. Strollers can frequently see him jogging through a forest near his home in the early morning.

Heinrich Geissler, who has been a member of the Public Services and Transport Workers Union since 1968, has made a nation-wide name for himself as a result of his draft bills and programmes.



Heinrich Geissler

(Photos: Sven Simon)

It was due to his initiative that Rhineland-Palatinate was the first Federal state to have a kindergarten legislation; and the hospital legislation introduced by him stipulated that the medical directors of hospitals must share special revenues with their medical staff.

Rhineland-Palatinate was also the first state to introduce enlightened senior citizens' legislation. Moreover, Geissler introduced a social centre for the ambulatory treatment of elederly people and for family assistance.

A planning committee for social policy which Geissler established in 1974 was among the first to draw attention to the forthcoming cost explosion in the health secotor. This committee subsequently provided a down-to-earth analysis of the position of elderly women in our society.

Heinrich Geissler is considered the father of the "new social approach", and essential parts of his ideas have meanwhile been integrated in the CDU programme. It was therefore no more than logical to nominate him as the CDU's new secretary-general.

(Kölner Stadt-Anzeiger, 28 January 1977)

SPD sniping worries Berlin Mayor Schütz

West Berlin's Governing Mayor Klaus Schütz, 50, is more worried about dissonsion within his own SPD ranks than strife with the opposing CDU – the strongest party in West Berlin since the 1975 election – or with the FDP, the small coalition partner.

Klaus Schütz has neen West Berlin's governing mayor since October 1969 and SPD state chairman since May 1968.

His troubles with his own party are largely due to the fact that West Berlin is an enclave on GDR territory and as a result that city's SPD is involved in constant provincial bickerings within its own factions.

This provincialism and isolation have led to a certain amount of neapotism, an intertwining of interests and clique formations.

Moreover, it seems that the party has failed to learn a lesson from its crushing defeat in the last election two years ago.

West Berlin's SPD is evidently unable to regenerate itself, to embark on a new beginning and to rally around Schütz, who is irreplaceable at the moment. Instead of coming forward with new ideas and deeds which would confirm its claim to leadership in the city, the SPD keeps eroding the governing mayor's position.

Klaus Schütz, a graduate in political science, has held the office of governing mayor longer than any of his predecessors and has managed to step out of the shadow of his mentor Willy Brandt, be-



Klaus Schütz

coming an attractive proposition for the electorate in his own right.

But Schütz is not quite blameless in connection with his party's present malaise.

He is an unemotional, matter-of-fact and realistic pragmatist who approaches problems with detachment and who has never been known to occupy himself with details. Instead, he has been the lofty party boss who has felt himself superior enough to look down on the infighting of his fellow party members with a certain bemusement and without taking it quite seriously.

His attitude is that of the detached intellectual who tries to combine political science and day-to-day politics.

But since a serious operation in the autumn of 1975, his slightly ironic attitude has been intermingled with a fair amount of resignation.

This *laissez faire* attitude vis-a-vis the "New Left", the "Young Right", the

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Bavaria's Franz Josef Strauss should not be written off

There is a whiff of resignation in the mounting intimations that CSU Chairman Franz Josef Strauss might not be disinclined to become Alfons Goppel's successor as Bavaria's premier.

For Strauss, who has an instinct for power and indeed for the loss of power, Bonn will always be valued higher than Munich.

If the CDU/CSU had not again failed to reach their election objective of achieving the absolute majority in the Bundestag – Strauss obviously blames others for this defeat – the CSU chairman would most assuredly have become the second (and perhaps, as a grey eminence, the first) man in a CDU/CSU Government.

Moreover, the manner in which Franz Josef Strauss brought about the Bad Kreuth decision to part company with the CDU and the manner in which he subsequently defended this decision and then rendered it null and void by a political compromise demonstrated his limits as party chairman.

For the first time in many years, the man who has hitherto cleverly succeeded in making careerists indebted to him and in gagging his "bosom enemies" is now confronted with opposition within his own ranks. Thus unrest among the rank and file of his party could very well prove the key to his future attitudes.

Strauss can of course assume that his Bavarian ambitions will come true pro-



Franz Josef Strauss

vided he approaches the matter with the necessary sensitivity – but, also, such sensitivity is not quite in keeping with his personality.

Strauss is not striving for the Bavarian premiership on his own behalf, but has let it be known that he would not decline if called upon to take on this post.

Although the party machinery is not exactly running smoothly at present, it is nevertheless likely to provide Herr Strauss with this office, notwithstanding the fact that Herr Goppel shows little inclination at present to relinquish it prematurely.

There is an obvious contradiction: While Goppel upholds his statement that he will remain in office until the end of his term, Strauss points to an agreement to the effect that the CSU's top candidate should enter the election campaign as "the holder of this office".

Strauss' opponents from other political camps are rubbing their hands with glee about his retreat to Bavaria. But they might be wise to give this matter a second thought.

For one thing, Strauss will remain the chairman of a successful party in Bavaria and, for another, the position of premier of Bavaria is not to be sneezed at. Thirdly, such a position would enable Strauss to make Federal policy through the Bundesrat. Thus, the retreat to Bavaria will be followed by a reappearance in Bonn, though in a different capacity.

(Der Tagesspiegel, 26 January 1977)

■ HOME AFFAIRS

Planning must start now for a revamped social security system

Having arrived at the conclusion that "pension insurances are calculable", the new Labour Minister Herbert Ehrenberg might be in for a rude awakening.

Pension insurances might be calculable – generally speaking – but not in our present situation. Only recently, the Labour Ministry and the compulsory Pension Funds failed to reach agreement on major calculation details for old age pensions. But at that time, the Government's draft bill for revamping the pension system was already circulating among interested parties.

There are two opposing views:

- The Federal Government hopes that it will soon be able to do away with the "pensions pile" – or, less humanely but more clearly expressed, the "pensioners pile" – because, starting from 1978 those born in the low birth-rate World War I years will reach pensionable age: and they could then easily be carried by the pension contributions of those born in the high birth-rate years who will be starting their working lives.
- An analysis by the *Bundesversicherungsanstalt für Angestellte* (Bfa) – Federal Insurance Office for White Collar Workers – arrives at the very opposite conclusion. Considering the growing popularity of flexible retirement age, there is no end of the pensions pile in sight.

The senior citizens born in the low birth-rate years are largely opting for retirement now. From 1980 onwards they will be followed by those born in the considerably higher birth-rate years after the First World War.

Newly-available figures seem to substantiate the Bfa calculations. On the other hand, there is little to indicate that the Government's calculations are correct, except perhaps the hope that fewer senior citizens will in future avail themselves of the possibility of premature retirement. The Labour Ministry has so far been unable to say on what it bases this assumption.

It would therefore be wiser to operate on the premise that in the years to come, too, people between the ages of 60 and 63 will be so worn by their working life that they will gladly apply for their pensions – especially in view of the fact that the poorly designed system of flexible retirement ages provides virtually no advantage for those who wait until they are 65.

The unfortunate thing about this dissension between the Federal Government and the Bfa is the fact that virtually no politician takes it seriously. The politicians' term of office will end in the autumn of 1980 – and their interest hardly extends geyond that time.

But the outlook in the pensions issue until 1980 is not bad at all. In fact, it is even better than assumed in the Labour Ministry only a very short while ago.

By the end of the present legislative period in Bonn, says the Bfa, the reserves of the Pension Funds will suffice for two months' payments – always providing that the economic development does not lag behind estimates. Herbert Ehrenberg had formerly assumed that the financial cushion would suffice for one and a half months' payments only.

Even the Free Democrats in Bonn who, in the course of their coalition negotiations with the SPD, succeeded in getting the envisaged increase of pension payments calculated on the basis of net salaries limited until 1980 at the latest, have not yet publicly commented on the latest Bfa calculations.

And yet they would have had every reason to do so, for after 1980, too, it will only be possible to adjust pensions to net salaries due to the unexpected increase in the pensions pile – unless, that is, the Pension Funds are relieved by other means as, for instance, the long overdue participation of pensioners in the cost of their health insurance.

It would thus seem that the Pension Funds, having only just started to put their finances in order, are heading for their next even bigger crisis – a crisis which is certainly not minimised by the fact it will not take place until the next decade.

By 1984 at the very latest, the Federal Government is compelled by law to provide widowers with the same pensions which widows are entitled to. The financial consequences of this are as yet unfathomable.

Moreover, starting from the mid-eighties, pensioners and the working population will become fully aware of the consequences of the "pill-gap".

The numerical relation between contribution-paying workers and pensioners, which is now already constantly shifting to the detriment of the working population, will deteriorate at a dramatic rate. Many are already guessing as to how long the much-vaunted deal between the generations, in other words between young and old, will hold.

Today, it takes 2.38 working people to pay for one pension. In 1985, this figure will drop to 2.24. But it must be borne in mind that not every insured person pays contributions.

It is quite conceivable that this relation will drop to two to one in the course of the next decade. And even if working contribution payers were to achieve high incomes due to progress in productivity and job security – and these are two rather daring suppositions – and if they were thus in a position to pay higher contributions, the deal between the generations will reach tolerance limits.

When confronted with such facts, social policy-makers usually reply that there is nothing they can do against such long-range developments.

The diminishing procreation drive of our citizens, they say, is as much outside their control as the economic development of the next 15 years. In any event, they maintain, legislation can at best be planned four years ahead.

But here lies the danger. Our social security system with all its ramifications must degenerate if we continue to plan on such a short-term basis. Four years is a negligible period, especially where pension insurance is concerned.

Even the intellectual and administrative preparation of the adjustment of pensions to incomes progression of 1957 – an important but not exactly difficult reform project – took more than four years.

If one compares the promise of that time with what is confronting us today, namely to bring our present system of social security safely through the eighties and the nineties, it is obvious that the issue must be tackled now.

The creation of a uniform social security system which would encompass government officials as well as the self-employed calls for thorough preparation which would have to include an extension of the state's financial participation in the social security system.

A bit of this realisation seems to have found its way to the Labour Ministry. Herbert Ehrenberg has announced that he will appoint a committee which, among other things, will deal with the new widowers' pensions which must be implemented by 1984.

But neither the Minister nor his colleagues know when this committee will begin its work, who will be on it and what other tasks it will deal with. In fact, the Minister and his colleagues are not even sure whether they should concern themselves with the matter before 1980.

Dieter Piel

(Die Zeit, 4 February 1977)

Continued from page 4

"Old Left" and the many other factions within the Berlin SPD and the issues they consider important has been a contributing factor in the mounting attacks on Schütz from the ranks of his own party.

As Klaus Schütz recently put it, "I have by and large enjoyed my office as governing mayor." But in saying so he probably had his "foreign policy tasks" in mind rather than the actual municipal work which the former state secretary in the Foreign Office considers irksome routine.

But Schütz is self-ctitical enough to realise that "this routine perhaps entails the danger of making one unable to grasp and absorb certain things."

The newly-formed Berlin Commission of the SPD Executive Committee under the chairmanship of Willy Brandt has now embarked on a worse of action to help Berlin's SPD in solving the city's present and future problems.

The notoriusly bad relationship between Schütz and Chancellor Schmidt, who considers the governing mayor an irritating nagger whose geographical position on the front line of *Ostpolitik* prevents him from getting the objective political picture which Schmidt has from his Bonn vantage point, does little to improve matters.

And yet, the different perconalities of Schmidt and Schütz would seem almost ideal for a coordinated *Ostpolitik*, with each of them playing his specific role.

Peter Jochen Winters

(Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung für Deutschland, 27 January 1977)

Bonn throws in the towel over economic policy

Metal workers are to get an extra 6.9 per cent in their pay packets this year. This was proposed by the mediators and agreed to by both labour and management.

The bargaining for percentages – management offered 4.75 while labour demanded 9.5 – ended by splitting the difference virtually down the middle. This outcome was predictable.

But although this spectacle repeats itself year after year, the parties concerned act as if they had escaped disaster by the skin of their teeth.

Management and labour tear their hair and admit defeat – a defeat, however, which, or so they say, is only just tolerable. But the whole thing is a well-established ritual of wage agreements and once every-thing is over, the two parties feel that they have done their duty for the time being. In any event, both of them knew long beforehand what the outcome would be.

The question is, how well the rest of the people in this country take this 6.9 per cent deal.

It is to be expected (or feared, depending on the vantage point) that the other branches of industry will follow suit with similar wage increases. In other words, business and the state will have to cope with increased labour costs and the working population will get more money – though only nominally so.

What does all this entail for the economic development in the immediate future? The answer is quite simple: Nothing! But his "nothing" must not be mistaken for something positive as the business year 1977 get under way. It means that, while monetary stability is not really jeopardised, the unemployment rate will remain unchanged. The 6.9 per cent is not exactly provocative.

The only one who felt himself provoked was Minister of Economic Affairs Hans Friderichs whose economic forecast for 1977 was based on lower wage increases.

In other words, his figures concerning monetary stability and economic growth (whatever that means in a phase of stagnation) might no longer hold true. But how much importance is to be attributed to the figures on which the forecast is based? They only show that the Federal Republic has thrown in the towel where active economic policy is concerned.

Labour and management could certainly contribute to such a policy provided both of them agreed on a more active wage policy. For it must be borne in mind that wage deals between five and eight per cent give the worker no more money than he had in the previous year. Higher taxes and increasing social security contributions on top of the normal inflation rate have seen to this.

The consumer thus continues to be short of cash, which means that the consumer boom cannot materialise and this is turn means that big investments, too, are unlikely. After all, why should industry invest when demand is insufficient to provide it with work to capacity?

Additional consumption could temporarily negate the old economic law that rising wages mean rising costs and therefore diminishing buying power of money. But such additional consumption could solve at least part of our unemployment problem – though not the major part of it.

An active wage policy, however – and it would be dishonest not to say so – would entail risks for our economy, and that is the last thing we need.

Ernst Willenbrock

(Deutsches Allgemeines Sonntagsblatt, 6 February 1977)

■ MACRO-ECONOMICS

Bonn keeps mum on policy for 1977

Nordwest-Zeitung

Neither a boom nor a new recession. That is the economic forecast for the Federal Republic for 1977 by Economic Affairs Minister Hans Friderichs.

In it he sticks mainly to the November report of the Council of Economic Experts (the Five Wise Men); but sounds a note of caution.

All in all, the official data concerning this year's expected economic development can be termed "so-so".

One of the remarkable aspects of the report is its reticence concerning concrete data about economic and monetary policy to be pursued this year.

Such data are required by law, but in this instance the Government took refuge in evasiveness. The hoped-for recipes for the economy failed to materialise.

But it might perhaps have been unreasonable to expect such recipes, for the dilemma with which economic policy-makers have been faced lately is obvious. The stumbling blocks can be listed as follows: The round of wage negociations is nearing its climax; foreign trade is hampered by uncertainties; and the choice between inflation and deflation is anything but easy.

The Government can hardly be expected to make clear recommendations to management and labour — both of whom cherish their independence — concerning wage deals.

Even so, the annual report intimated the importance of restraint in wage demands and recommended that this year's wage deals be roughly the same as those of 1976.

But at the same time the report dampened the expectations of business whose incomes should rise by between 9 and 10 per cent — in other words, less than generally assumed.

This is significant because in the same breath, the report stresses the importance of profits for investments and thus for the creation of sorely-needed jobs. It seems evident that the Government was loath to step on anybody's foes.

The bugbear "foreign trade" is very real. Even with the best will in the world it is impossible at this stage to make anything even resembling an accurate forecast.

And finally there is the question of a booster shot for the economy, to be administered by the state. The report knows no answer to this question. The Government is still groping in the dark trying to find a middle-of-the road solution between inflation and deflation, between stepping on the gas and putting on the brakes. Both would seem necessary if full employment and economic growth are to be secured once more.

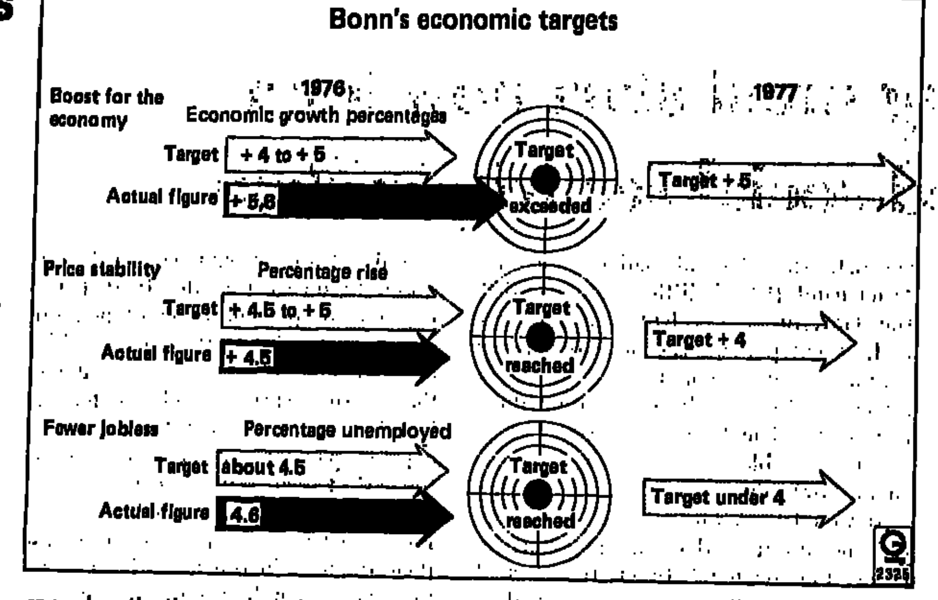
It would be rather interesting to see when the Federal Government will stop playing it close to the chest where this issue is concerned.

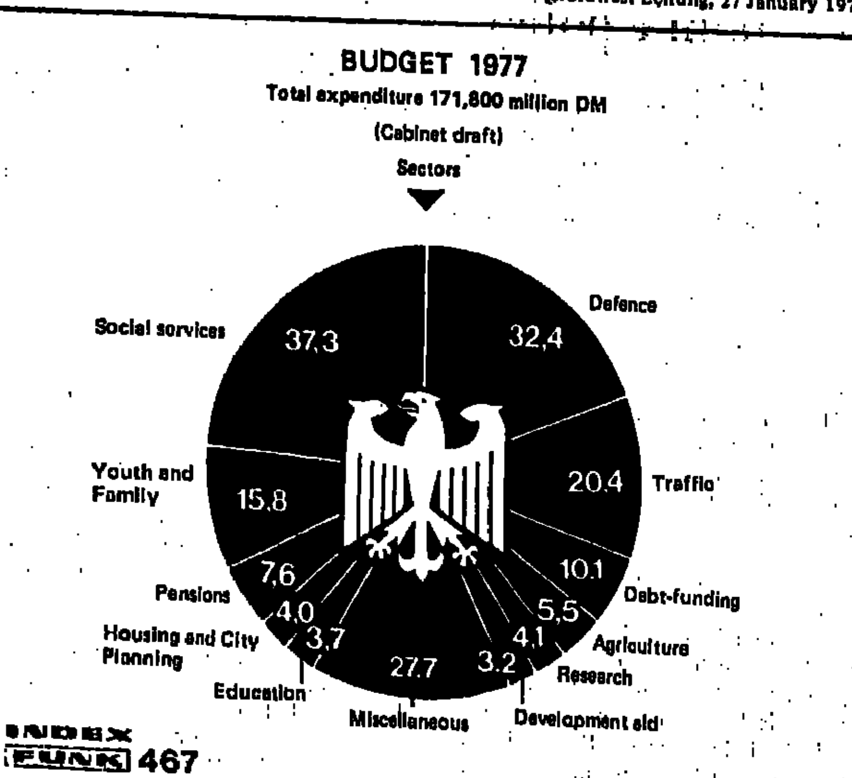
Though the report once more mentioned the 10,000 million deutschmark Government programme as a boost for the economy, the Bundesbank (this country's Central Bank) fears that this would have an inflationary effect.

It seems that Bonn is rather inclined to accept somewhat higher inflation rates in order to get the economy off the ground, while the Bundesbank is determined to curb inflation and favours a slower, but healthy and sustained economic growth.

Leonhard Spielhofer

(Nordwest Zeitung, 27 January 1977)





Federal Budget up by 6.2 per cent

The Federal Budget for 1977, approved by the Cabinet on 26 January, provides for an increase in expenditure of 6.2 per cent from 164,000 million to 171,800 million deutschmarks.

The Government will have to take up loans to the tune of 23,000 million deutschmarks in order to balance the budget.

The new budget has allocated DM37,300 million to the sectors of labour and the social system and DM32,400 to defence.

The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs will have 2.6 per cent less at its disposal in 1977 than in the previous year because the Federal Labour Office in Nuremberg no longer needs subsidies from Federal coffers.

The item Post and Telecommunications has dropped from DM298.4 million in 1976 to DM5.1 million because the Post Office will henceforth repay the principal and interest on former loans from its own resources. This is the smallest item in the new budget.

The Cabinet also approved Finance Minister Hans Apel's medium-range financial plan, presented with the budget, and which aims at reducing the annual budgetary deficits by additional revenues resulting from the increase of VAT (Value Added Tax) from its present 11 to 13 per cent as of 1978.

The Cabinet has thus given the green light for the forthcoming tax package which provides for tax relief in certain sectors. Diminished revenues of 700 million deutschmarks for 1978 and of 1,300 million in the following years have been taken into account.

The 7.5 per cent increase in the 1978 budget over that of 1977 was attributed by Finance Minister Apel to additional expenditures of DM1,800 million resulting from increased child subsidies.

The medium-range finance plan, which is based on the assumption of a four per cent anual growth, envisages the following budgets: 1978 DM184,700 million; 1979 DM195,800 million; and 1980 DM207,500 million.

FDP budgetary expert Hoppe said that the envisaged investments, would help stabilise the economy without affecting anti-inflationary policies.

SPD Member of Parliament Westphal welcomed the 400 million deutschmarks set aside for the improvement of the situation on the labour market.

(Lübecker Nachrichten, 27 January 1977)

Federal Republic lags in development aid

Indisputable OECD statistics reveal an embarrassing fact for the affluent industrialised nations. The richest of these nations provide, proportionate to their GNP, the least development aid and fall short of the UN mark of 0.7 per cent of the GNP.

Thus, for instance, the Federal Republic, the United States, Japan and Switzerland are still far from reaching this target, which was set as far back as 1970.

Committed policy-makers in the development aid sector in this country are ill at ease when faced with the fact that the Federal Republic ranks pretty much at the bottom of the list of providers of assistance. In Europe alone, this country is behind Denmark, Belgium, France, Norway and Sweden.

This discomfort is to some extent also attributable to the fact that the Federal Republic seems to be stepping rather gingerly during talks in the North-South dialogue on a new international economic order aimed at bringing about a more equitable distribution of wealth.

Moreover, accusations levelled against Bonn in this connection do not always originate from the ranks of the Third World. Many of them are levelled at home, in international economic committees and within the EEC.

And yet the Federal Republic had good reasons not to yield instantly to pressure exerted by the Third World in demanding a network of raw materials agreements which would guarantee equitable prices for the suppliers.

Existing agreements of this nature have failed to prove effective. But because this is so, and in order to retain its credibility, the new Federal Government should not restrict itself to rejecting such proposals, but should instead present a workable alternative to the perfectionist ideas of the developing nations.

It is obvious that this will not be possible without certain control mechanisms in favour of the poor countries of the Third World, notwithstanding the fact that adherents of a pure market economy in our country consider this a disastrous form of planned economy.

On the other hand, it is a well-established fact that the principles of a market economy as hitherto practised in trade relations between industrialised and developing nations have failed to stop the increasing impoverishment of the Third World.

Chancellor Schmidt seems to be aware of the gravity of the conflicts that might arise from this situation, as borne out by the fact that he dealt at considerable length with the North-South problem in his government policy statement, promising to provide more assistance to the poorest of the Third World nations.

But the budget with which the Development Aid Minstry has been endowed is only insignifcantly greater than in the previous year.

It is quite conceivable that the latest oil price increase will eat up funds which the industrialised nations had originally earmarked for development aid.

The attitude of the nouveau riche oil-producing nations towards the Third World with all its internal conflicts has certainly not been free of selfishness.

But this is no reason for the Federal Republic and other industrialised nations of the West as well as those of the East bloc to penalise the Third World by withholding vital development aid.

Karl Seidl

(Kölner Stadt-Anzeiger, 18 January 1977)

■ AGRICULTURE

Competition makes Europe's agriculture policy 'grow up'



Europe's agricultural policy is gradually coming of age. Only once a year — at West Berlin's "Green Week " agricultural show — is major European agricultural policy put on show, so to speak, with the public as spectator. But Berlin provides only the stage; it is not the place where such policy is made.

It is amazing how many prominent politicians gather at Berlin's Radio Tower for the occasion. The "Green Week" has a reputation of providing an excellent backdrop for meetings, talks and the establishment of new contacts.

The course of Europe's agricultural policy — though hotly disputed — is set. Though critics still demand reforms, improvements are restricted to matters of detail rather than the concept as a whole. The policy is gradually coming of age.

The objections raised against the agricultural policy at present in effect revolve primarily around expenses, for the costs of our "green Europe" are rising constantly and there are ever-growing surpluses of which Europe can rid itself only by means of high export subsidies.

At the same time, imports from non-EEC countries, which have a depressive effect on prices, must be curbed by means of special levies.

Production which does not correspond with the exigencies of the market is spreading in many sectors, protected by the Community's market regulations and at the expense of the taxpayer.

A positive aspect lies in the fact that Europe's agriculture has gained in strength as a result of the Treaty of Rome.

It has earned well, it has re-invested and a great many unviable agricultural and related enterprises have been discontinued.

There are only few regions within the Community where the rural population suffers from want. With a few exceptions, the agricultural sector is no longer a "source of political and social disturbances."

But even so, it can rightly be asked whether all this could not have been achieved at a lesser cost.

At the time Europe's agricultural market was conceived, its instigators maintained that the high cost was justified as a means of achieving the major goal, namely the monetary and economic union of Eruope.

But these illusions no longer exist, and in practice agricultural policy is now unable to proceed beyond patchwork.

The public at large is hot fully aware of this because the issue is obscured by regulations, red tape and "agriculture officialese". In fact, as things now stand, there is even a danger that our "green Europe" might hamper a more far-reaching union due to constant bickering in the agriculture sector.

But it would be a fallacy to put the whole blame on Brussels. The problem that confronted the Community when the Treaty of Rome was signed can be summed up as the transformation of an agriculture which in times of shortages was entirely production-oriented, into a market and sales oriented branch of the economy which — regardless of what this might cost — is no longr forced to increase production.

This change of course could almost be termed an agricultural revolution and met with heavy resistance from various national quarters.

The most honest of the proponents of the new course was EEC Vice-President Sicco Mansholt who made no bones about the fact that there were too many uncompetitive agricultural enterprises in the Community which had to disappear if agriculture was to recover.

In order to steer agricultural production in the right direction, Mansholt was even courageous enough to call for price reductions.

His ideas, which subsequently became known as the Mansholt Plan, today form a chapter of agricultural history. And discussions at the "Green Week" were marked by the Mansholt Plan for many years.

Mansholt was responsible for the Community's agricultural policy from 1958 to 1972. He was succeeded by another Dutchman, Petrus Josephus Lardinois; and since 1 January 1977 this post has been held by the Dane Finn Olaf Gunedlach. He, too, represents a foreign trade (on a global scale) oriented country which favours agricultural exports and a streamlined agriculture.

This would lead one to assume that the Brussels "head" of Europe's "green market" would be anything but narrow-minded. And, indeed, Mansholt's revolutionary proposals bear witness to commitment in the right direction.

One of Mansholt's most outspoken opponents at the time was the then president of the German Farmers' Association, the late Edmund Rehwinkel. Whenever the two met the sparks would fly.

But at least there was always something happening in that era. All this has changed, however, and the flames of dispute have died down.

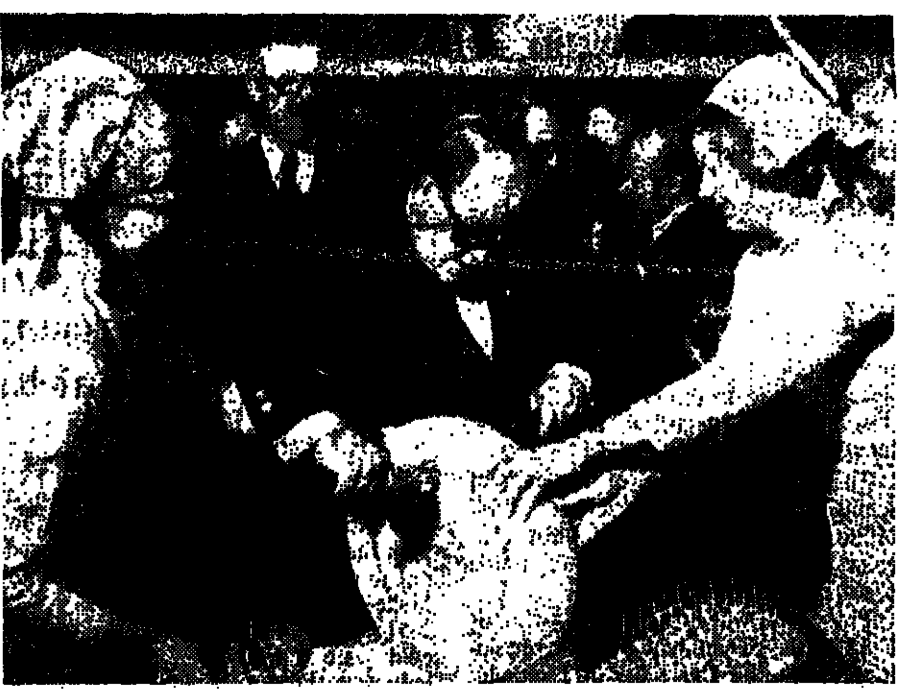
As Mansholt once put it: "Our great ally is the cost element. Neither governments nor the people can in the long run afford to spend enormous amounts in order to destroy surpluses."

This is the cardinal problem which the Community's agricultural policy has been unable to solve so far. This policy is hampered by the fact that national interests are always given priority by the policy-makers.The stalls at Berlin's "Green Week" bear witness to growing competition and should serve as a warning.

Old and new agricultural producers from all parts of the world — among them a growing number of developing nations — are making a bid for the European market, and it is becoming increasingly difficult to justify and finance protectionist measures.

Europe's agriculture has enjoyed a long and effective closed season. But this cannot last for ever.

(Der Tagesspiegel, 30 January 1977)



Agriculture Minister Josef Ertl at the opening of the "Green Week" in Berlin (Photo: Schirner)

Produce from 35 countries on show in Berlin

Thirty five countries are represented at this year's "Green Week" agriculture show in West Berlin.

In view of diminishing population figures and a market which has largely reached saturation point, food producers cannot expect to increase the volume of production.

But even so, this branch of business, whose present turnover of some 90,000 million deutschmarks per annum makes it one of the most important sectors of our economy, is very adept in enticing the consumer to increase his standards and in titillating his appetite for specialties from all parts of the world.

It is in this light that we must view the heavy participation of foreign producers at Berlin's "Green Week" agricultural show which was officially opened by Agriculture Minister Josef Ertl on 27 January.

With 35 countries having national stalls at the show, foreign participation is greater than ever before. Moreover there are 170 individual exhibitors from abroad.

The Federal Republic is represented by 430 individual exhibitors.

The prime objective of the exhibitors was to do business with Berlin. For the Federal Republic, the exhibition fulfils the function of a test market.

(Münchner Merkur, 26 January 1977)

Drought hit farm output, says report

The European Community's much-maligned agricultural policy has brought many advantages to the 258 million consumers in the EEC member nations — above all by securing their supply of with agricultural products.

The guaranteed minimum prices for agricultural products not only protect the Community's nine million farmers from intolerable risks so far as their incomes are concerned, but they have also had the effect of making "our consumers live in the lee of stormy price developments on world markets."

The Annual Report 1976 on the State of Agriculture in the Community stresses the importance of "a certain stability" of food prices which — in most EEC nations — have risen at a lesser rate than consumer prices .

The report draws special attention to this fact in relation to the immense increase in oil prices.

According to first estimates, the report says, agricultural production has dropped both in volume and in quality as a result of the drought in the summer of 1976.The 22,000 million deutschmarks spent in financing the Community's agricultural policy in 1976 — amounting to close to one-third of the total EEC budget — made up a mere 37 per cent of total expenditures of the Community's nine member nations for agriculture (including special measures in favour of consumers, as for instance the cheaper sale of butter and subsidies for sugar purchases on world markets).

Private householders' expenditures for food and drink are diminishing in proportion to overall spending. According to the last available figures, these expenditures amounted in the Federal Republic to 20.4 per cent of the family budget and in Ireland to 38.7 per cent.

The drop has been most significant with regard to the per capita consumption of potatos, bread, butter and fresh milk products. On the other hand, consumption of fruit, vegetables, sugar, meat, eggs and cheese has increased.

Consumer habits within the EEC differ widely. Thus, for instance, the Frenchman drinks fifty times more wine per annum than his German counterpart, but he drinks only one-third the amount of milk an Irishman consumes.

In view of the fact that, where some products are concerned, agriculture produces more than needed for domestic consumption — in the case of skimmed milk powder, butter and beef this surplus has caused high storage costs — it should be borne in mind, the report says, that an excessive dependence on shipments from non-EEC countries also has its problems.

This is exemplified by such items as protein animal food (especially soya beans) where the EEC must cover 80 per cent of its requirements by imports from non-EEC countries.

The Community's agriculture is severely burdened by the consequences of the unstable monetary situation. The Brussels report goes on to say that the once uniform agricultural market was divided into seven monetary zones at the end of 1976.

The 2,200 million deutschmarks earmarked to offset monetary imbalances (in order to provide relief for both producers and consumers) in the EEC budget will "presumably be exceeded by a considerable amount" due to the weakness of the British pound.

Hans-Peter Ott

(Stuttgarter Nachrichten, 26 January 1977)

■ MOTORING

Back to the drawing-board for a new VW safety model

Hannoversche Allgemeine

Automotive safety is available — at a price, and Volkswagen are currently trying to find out how much safety can be supplied at a price motorists will be prepared to pay.

Volkswagen are the only motor manufacturers outside the United States who are still working on a safety model. It will be used exclusively for research, but is being designed as nearly as possible with cost practicability in mind. It should be ready for trials by 1980.

This latest project is the third generation of experimental safety models as far as Volkswagen are concerned. First came the ES VW 1, built in 1970 to comply with US government specifications for automotive safety in the 1,000-kilo category.

"The ES VW 1 was too heavy and designed with too little attention to economic considerations," Harald Schimkat says. Dr Schimkat is the engineer in charge of research at Volkswagen's Wolfsburg works.

The first Volkswagen safety model was much more like standard assembly-line models to look at than its counterparts designed by other manufacturers. But it was 4.7 metres (15ft 5in) long and powered by a 100 DIN hp engine.

In accordance with US specifications the ES VW 1 was designed to ensure the survival of driver and passengers in a head-on collision at eighty kilometres an hour (fifty mph).

These specifications were drawn up with US models in mind, and although European and Japanese manufacturers complied with them in respect of lighter models, their safety versions bore scant relation to either accident statistics or economic considerations.

So Daimler Benz, Opel and Volkswagen amended the US specifications for a second generation of safety models. These new models were designed to withstand a head-on collision at 64 kilometres an hour, or forty mph.

Volkswagen, for instance, built a safety version of the Golf, marketed in the United States as the VW Rabbit. It was 3.9 metres (12ft 10in) long, weighed 897kg (1,973lb) and was powered by a standard seventy-hp engine.

It cost several hundred thousand deutschmarks, Harald Schmikat reckons.

The main difference between the ES VW 1 and the Golf ES VW 2, he adds, was chassis design. In order to absorb frontal impact the first model incorporated two costly shock absorbers in the framework of the front section.

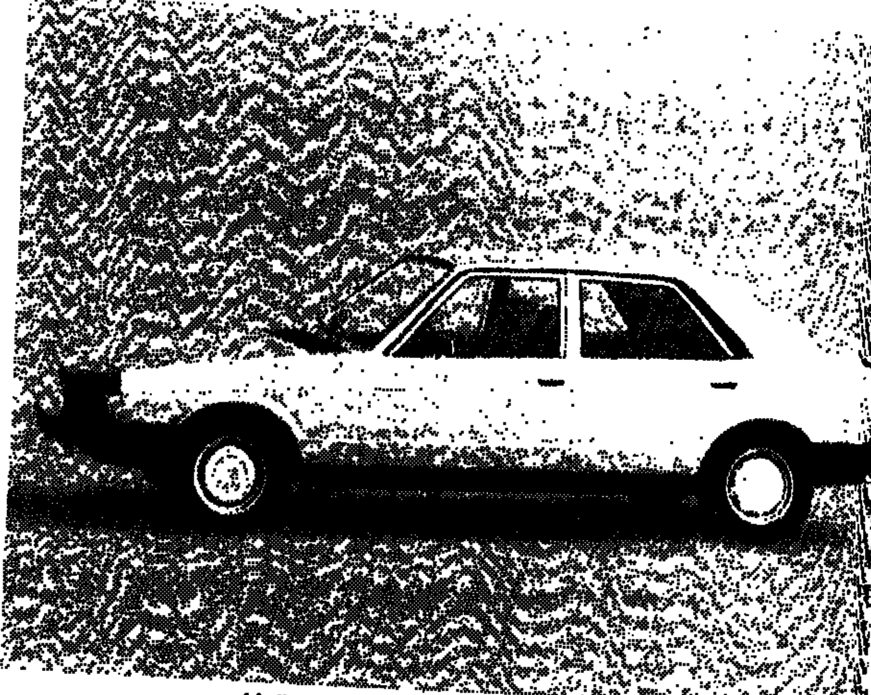
From the windscreen one section went up to the roof while the other extended down to the doorposts. The passenger compartment was completely enclosed by this framework.

In the safety version of the VW Golf the design engineers did not run the framework right round the passenger compartment; they chose to run a fork arrangement through its midriff and along the floor.

In crash trials this arrangement proved extremely successful. The dummies would have survived a head-on crash even with a much larger car, such as the NSU Ro 80.

The front section of the Golf was smashed up, but the passenger compartment remained intact. Neither the windscreen nor door windows were shattered. The doors stayed shut, but opened normally afterwards.

Volkswagen promptly capitalised on the experiment, fitting out the new Audi 100 with a fork framework in advance of any safety specifications that might require the additional protection the design affords.


Volkswagen's experimental safety model

(Photo: Volkswagenw

At the present stage of safety research VW have abandoned the US principle of catering for specific safety requirements regardless of accident statistics.

The Wolfsburg safety engineers started by analysing accident and traffic patterns. "We cannot take in every kind of accident that occurs," Dr Schimkat comments, "but we have to find out how much vehicle safety we can contribute."

He was explaining the position to a transport conference at Hanover University of Technology.

A priority list of accident categories is to be drawn up in conjunction with HUK, the Motor Insurers Association. "Accident frequency alone may not be the overriding consideration," Dr Schimkat reckons.

There are, for instance, obvious differences in vehicle size and weight. Injury and safeguard criteria for drivers and passengers must be investigated and reviewed.

A new look must even be taken at the dummy that is used in crash trials. Its head must certainly be made to resemble the human head more closely.

Last, but not least, the actuarial cost of injuries must be assessed, grotesque though it may seem. The management are determined to ensure that overall expenditure is economically justified.

Safety is hard to sell, manufacturers maintain. Car-buyers would be put off by high surcharges for safety. Is this true? A counter-argument was advanced in Hanover.

A safety version of the Golf, it was said, would cost roughly the same as the current GTI model, which, whatever else may be said about it, is not really anyone's idea of a safety car.

Dieter Tasch

(Hannoversche Allgemeine, 2 February 1977)

Methanol-mix fuels not before 1982

Motor fuels consisting of a blend of conventional petrol, or gasoline, and methanol, or methylated spirits, no longer present the slightest problem technologically, but they cannot be marketed before 1982 at the earliest.

These, in a nutshell, are conclusions reached after full-scale trials conducted by the Bonn Ministry of Research and Technology in conjunction with Volkswagen, ADAC (the Munich-based motoring organisation), West Berlin's Senator of Health and Environmental Affairs, the Federal Environment Agency, Deutsche Shell, the Fuel Advisory Council and BASF.

The trials involved a fleet of 45 test vehicles and journalists were briefed on the results at a Frankfurt press conference.

(Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung für Deutschland, 1 February 1977)

All drivers daydream at times, says Munich researcher

Motorists at the wheel of sophisticated vehicles are frequently out of their depth. Some are unable to find the right response to the given traffic situation, and all motorists daydream at invervals.

This claim was made, on the basis of scientific evidence, by Professor Wolf Müller-Limmroth at the fifteenth congress of judges specialising in traffic cases, held in Goslar.

Professor Müller-Limmroth, who is head of the department of work physiology at Munich University of Technology, reckons entirely new medical tests are attributable not only to age or illcants.

More than 600 traffic experts from all over the country were alarmed to learn that human shortcomings at the wheel are attributable not only to age or illness.

Research has proved that all of us daydream at intervals throughout the day. Once every ninety minutes or so we are all virtually put out of action and unable to react.

"We do not yet know what consequences this realisation has for traffic," Professor Müller-Limmroth noted.

Ability to react depends on the extent to which the driver may be considered awake at any given time. Between 2 and 3 p.m. most of us are twenty per cent below par. Between two and three in the morning we are seventy per cent below average vigilance over the day as a whole.

Situations that are likely to lead to accidents also arise from fluctuations in how we feel. "If you have just had a row with the wife you would be well advised not to drive off straight away," Professor Müller-Limmroth claims.

The sense of smell or the sensation of cold are a good stimulus to help you stay awake, he added. If you are driving any distance you really ought to let cold air reach your feet. There is nothing like cold feet for preventing you from dozing off.

Stretching or taking a little exercise once every 55 minutes is also a good way to stay awake.

Professor Müller-Limmroth went on to outline a number of other results that have yet to be taken into account in the provisions of the highway code:

— If your vision is normal — 1.25 — you can make out an obstacle 187 metres ahead and take the necessary precautions. If your vision is a mere 0.8 you will only be able to see 125 metres. At this rate you ought not to exceed speeds of 100 kilometres an hour, or sixty-mph.

The latest draft traffic regulations specify that vision should not be worse than 0.7, otherwise the applicant will be required to wear glasses. Professor Müller-Limmroth reckons this level is too low.

— Many people, irrespective of their vision, cannot see at all well in the dusk. So a special test of night vision ought to be made.

— At night a driver whose eyes have veered as he reached out to dimp a cigarette can take up to three seconds to reaccustom himself to scanning the distance. So at a speed of 100 kilometres an hour the motorist will be virtually blind for a distance of eighty metres.

— As a rule motorists notice road signs only when there is an additional sign saying, say, "Police check." They seldom pay much attention to pedestrian crossing signs or the red triangle with the exclamation point telling drivers to look out for some unspecified danger. Such signs are 100-per-cent more likely to be borne in mind if the words "Police check" are appended to them.

— You automatically drive worse if you have not been at the wheel of a car for weeks or months. After 10,000 kilometres or so you automatically work the various pedals, switches and levers, but the ability to do so nosedives surprisingly fast.

As a result driving becomes harder work because you need to concentrate harder. This physical and mental strain makes driving a riskier business.

If you have been out of action for six months, say, you will apparently need at least six weeks to reaccustom yourself to driving. So, Professor Müller-Limmroth concludes, there is such a thing as a "Sunday driver."

Detlef Böttcher-Ramdohr

(Hamburger Abendblatt, 28 January 1977)

The pros and cons of atomic energy having assumed the proportions of a religious controversy, compromise between supporters and opponents of nuclear power stations now seems virtually out of the question, and with both sides doggedly arguing about fundamentals, the debate is in many ways typically German.

Supporters have hitherto argued in the main that nuclear power is cheapoer than electricity generated by conventionally-fired power stations and that unless it is developed at full speed, there will be a power shortage of catastrophic proportions.

This line of argument, being based on current market prices, has been knocked for six in recent months. Reactor cost estimates have doubled in next to no time, uranium prices have rocketed and radioactive waste disposal seems increasingly likely to prove enormously expensive.

As for the lights going out by 1980 unless nuclear power stations are commissioned without delay, this particular line of argument is now rated a gross exaggeration.

Supporters of nuclear power are not, of course, motivated entirely by objective considerations. They too have irrational fads, especially a naive belief in the necessity of economic growth.

The fuel and power lobby may argue that it is obliged by industrial consumers to lay on ever greater supplies of electric power, thus the blame cannot be laid at its door.

In practice, however, power utilities continually advocate higher consumption. In our economic system they have no option but to think in terms of increasing output and sales like motor manufacturers and everyone else. They can hardly be expected to appeal to consumers to cut back consumption.

■ FUEL AND POWER

Power industry should be nationalised to save energy

Opponents of atomic energy likewise have a mixed bag of motives. For one, they must don the mantle of a critical voice of public opinion without having access to all sources of information. They represent the interests of the man in the street against the powerful alliance of bureaucracy and industry.

This, of course, is a bona fide viewpoint, but the opponents of nuclear power also have their quasi-religious fads. If ever irrational fears of the onward march of technology were warranted, then surely atomic energy is a sector in which anxiety is justified. Hiroshima and Nagasaki speak for themselves.

Yet the civil rights movement which nuclear power station opponents have brought into being has unquestionably drawn into its ranks individuals whose denominational sense of mission and religious fanaticism bear unmistakeable traces of neurosis.

What is more, their ranks have inevitably been swelled by extremists who regard Wyhl and Brokdorf, two of the proposed nuclear power station sites that have been the scene of repeated sit-ins and the like over the past year or so, as a stick with which to mobilise opinion with a view to "smashing the system."

This being the situation, it is high time the government stated its case. It is not good enough for a state Premier who is faced with the prospect of a renewed succession of protest demonstrations merely to argue the need for ever greater deployment of police manpower.

Seventeen thousand million deutschmarks in public funds may have been invested in nuclear research and development, but this does not mean, by any stretch of the imagination, that the role of nuclear power cannot be called into question.

Should nuclear power be the mainstay of the economy or ought the pace of development at least to be slowed down? Surely a reappraisal is warranted now that opponents of atomic energy no longer merely appeal to irrational fears, but increasingly base their arguments on specific safety and environmental considerations.

It is not a matter of putting back the clock of technological development. Mankind is not going to regain tis pre-nuclear innocence. But there is still time to take it easy and not plunge headlong into nuclear development.

We still have a sufficient amount of alternative energy sources, even though they may prove more expensive to convert into electric power. We can still afford the seeming luxury of pausing for thought.

In order not to plunge into abject dependence on atomic energy the Federal government would, of course, need to launch without delay a programme designed to effect substantial energy savings.

Over a period of years and with the aid of investments and tax incentives the growth rate in energy consumption must be reduced perceptibly. A naive belief in numerical growth rates, rejoicing in additional annual consumption totalling thousands of millions of kilowatts, must give way to what might be termed internal expansion.

Each and every power station can be taken as an example of the scope for energy-saving we have within easy reach. Two thirds of the heat generated at the average power station plays no part in producing electric power. It is waste, a by-product that is either pumped into thin air or into the nearest river in the form of hot water from the cooling system.

As for the remaining third, half of it is used to meet the low-temperature requirements of domestic consumers who could be well served by the heat that is wasted.

But a rethink along these lines will need to be conducted in the teeth of opposition from the fuel and power lobby, which is strictly market-orientated.

So there is logic in the idea of gradually nationalising the whole power industry as proposed by Horst-Ludwig Riemer, the North Rhine-Westphalian Minister of Economic Affairs.

No one is upset nowadays by the idea that roadbuilding has been nationalised. The government and local authorities have taken on a meaningful and worthwhile job in assuming responsibility for road construction.

Energy is an even more important sector for which the government might well assume responsibility. Paving the way for a political reform of this magnitude would surely be an epoch-making challenge.

Peter Klinkenberg

(Frankfurter Rundschau, 31 January 1977)

EDUCATION

'Host' language vital for foreign schoolchildren

Preparatory school systems in a number of European countries will have to be radically reorganised and adapted to cope with the literally millions of children of foreign workers.

Sixty delegates and observers from nineteen member states of the European Council met recently for a week-long symposium in Berlin to discuss how this can best be done and what changes are necessary.

Language problems proved to be a main focus of attention for alll the countries. Experience has shown that if children of foreign workers are taught in their own language they do not bother to learn the language of the country in which they are living.

Nevertheless if they are to have a fighting chance later on it is necessary for them to be taught in both languages.

The symposium therefore recommended that, at the parents' wish foreign children may be taught in their own language at preparatory school, but during this time the language of the "host" country should be introduced and later take over completely at school.

Special emphasis was laid on the necessity of inducing the other children to accept foreign children at school.

As regards helping the children to integrate socially, the symposium came to the conclusion that it is up to teachers to do more to help them settle down. This, education experts felt, should include some sound teaching on the rudiments of the country's economic and social structure and culture.

They also particularly stressed the value of establishing closer contact with teachers in the children's home country.

The symposium further recommended that primary school teachers might make more effort to build up a solid relationship with their pupils' parents. This would narrow the gap between the children's home and school lives.

Teachers could work even more efficiently in their work with children if they were to act a a "go-between" between their own country and foreign workers and their children. They could also offer parents help with any problems they might come up against in settling down in their new country.

The European Council has been working on solutions to the particular difficulties foreign workers and their children experience ever since about 1970. Three and a half million of the six million children of foreign workers in European countries are now of school-age.

In Berlin, where the symposium was organised by Education Senator Walter Rasch at the wish of the Ministry of Education, every third child born today has foreign parents. *dpa*

(Frankfurter Rundschau, 27 January 1977)

Row in Hamburg over new teacher contracts

It's going to be shorter working hours for newly qualified teachers in Hamburg from now on. As from 1 February they will only be offered so-called "two-thirds contracts" by their employer, the state. This means that their working hours, and, of course, their pay will be cut by a third.

Hamburg is the first state to introduce this measure, which is intended to ease the job situation for teachers.

Although the Hamburg Senate made a final decision over this on 4 January it has only now been publicly announced. The Teachers Union is opposing the measure as "a threat to the efficient running of schools."

Like the education authorities in other states, the Hamburg education authorities started giving newly qualified teachers part time work only last year. This enabled the state to employ 434 part time teachers instead of only two hundred full time teachers.

The works councils involved spoke out against this, and even an arbitration board set up after the Labour Management Act for Civil Servants was passed refused to accept these part time contracts. The fact that a 25-year old married teacher being paid on average DM 918,73 per month was getting less than he would on the dole was bitterly criticised.

Education officials reckon that a teacher with a two-thirds contract will take home DM 1,180.22 per month. They claim that bringing in a two-thirds system is unavoidable at present because of the large numbers of unemployed teachers and lack of funds in schools to employ the necessary number of full-time staff.

At the moment there are about one thousand unemployed teachers in Hamburg. There are plans to engage grammer school teachers, but no primary or secondary modern school teachers.

The Teachers Union is demanding that the Senate reverse its decision and is urging all Works Councils not to accept two-thirds contracts.

It says the new ruling has been passed without prior consultation with the union, and adds that the Senate has made no provision for changing two-thirds agreements into full contracts at a later stage.

The Hamburg Education Department has also drawn up a Bill for a new education law which, if passed, will make it harder to gain a place at a technical college or vocational training college.

The authorities say, however, that the new restrictions will apply only to colleges which have already exceeded their intake capacity, particularly as regards space and facilities. *Dieter Stäcker*

(Der Tagesspiegel, 26 January 1977)

200 firms opt for new job training scheme

Further education in this country is becoming more and more of a problem each year. In 1960 in Baden-Wurttemberg about six per cent of nineteen-year olds left school with their *Abitur*, the qualification with which they can be admitted to university.

By 1976 over 17 per cent had their *Abitur*. And in 1985 it is likely to be 20.5 per cent. Clearly the flood of university applications is going to rise, too.

Under such circumstances it is necessary to find fair alternative opportunities for further education for school-leavers with *Abitur*.

At the moment 85 to 90 per cent of them apply to universities. But the relatively slight chance they have of getting a place at all, the fairly lengthy period of study and the difficulty of getting a job as a university graduate is bringing a lot of very bright school-leavers round to the idea of considering other alternatives.

One such alternative is available to them in Heidenheim where a new vocational training college has just been opened. This is the fourth such college now in Baden-Wurttemberg. The other three are in Stuttgart, Mannheim and Villingen/Schwenningen.

Education authorities in Baden-Württemberg are hoping to solve the problem of university bottlenecks by offering school-leavers with *Abitur* vocational training courses. For many students these are likely to be particularly attractive since they fit them for a definite job on leaving college, in contrast to some university courses.

Furthermore, in recent years industry, trade and the services sector have been clamouring for more trained and qualified staff.

Already about thirty students have completed courses at the Baden-Wurttemberg colleges, which comprise a close and balanced combination of theory and practice.

In 1972 the three Stuttgart industrial giants Daimler-Benz, Bosch and Standard Elektrik cooperated in working out an extremely successful three-year course. It included economics, technology and sociology combined with a suitable amount of field work.

Two years later the Baden-Wurttemberg Ministry of Education decided to follow up this experiment and in 1974 the first two vocational colleges were opened, offering students courses leading to state-recognised qualifications.

Ten courses have now been started along the lines of the original Stuttgart experiment. For the field of economics these include banking, data processing, commerce, industry, transport and insurance.

The technical range includes electrical engineering and mechanical engineering. And school-leavers interested in sociology can study either straight sociology or social welfare.

After a two year introductory sandwich course students sit an intermediate examination. After this they go on to study their subject in more depth.

After studying successfully for three years students leave college with similar qualifications to those of university graduates with the exception that their "titles" have the suffix BA (Berufsakademie) signifying that they have studied at a vocational college.

The first graduates of these colleges have already started work, entering firms already half way up the ladder and going into highly specialised and responsible jobs in, for instance industrial planning, accountancy or marketing.

For technology specialists there are some alluring jobs in production planning and quality control. All these are areas of trade and industry which offer qualified staff good prospects of rising to leading positions.

In industry the cost of such training for a school-leaver is reckoned out at around 40,000 deutschmarks.

A considerable number of firms from all sectors of trade and industry have now followed the lead of Daimler-Benz, Bosch and Standard Elektrik. Last autumn altogether 210 companies in Baden-Wurttemberg were actively cooperating in new training schemes.

The Stuttgart experiment has been widely acclaimed throughout the Federal Republic. Hamburg and Kiel have already copied the Stuttgart scheme and similar colleges have been started up in Bochum, Hanover, Cologne and Neuwied. *Werner Neitzel*

(Die Welt, 21 January 1977)

Art education 'neglected'

According to the *Deutscher Künstlerbund* (German Artists' Association) too little attention is being paid to art education in the Federal Republic's schools.

In an extensive study which the board of the *Künstlerbund* addressed to the Federal and State Commission for Educational Palnning, it criticises the fact that "our educational policy is governed by purely utilitarian considerations."

The study says that the creative element of education is totally neglected in our schools. The study furthermore claims that drawing, music and physical education are the prerequisites for the promotion of Man's creative prowess.

The ommission of art instruction creates the danger of "stunting the creative element in our understanding of social aspects, in science and in living in a community in general."

The study also compalins about the fact that artistic training is also no longer an objective at our institutions of higher learning. *dpa*

(Süddeutsche Zeitung, 19 January 1977)

FILM

Sam Peckinpah directs German anti-war film

The opening scenes of the film *Steiner – das Eiserne Kreuz* (Steiner – the Iron Cross) depict the essence of Hitler's Germany in a few terse shots of Hitler Youth planting flags on a mountaintop, interspersed with brief documentary shots of the Third Reich.

As an acoustic backdrop, bright children's votices sing an old nursery rhyme. The title sequences are brilliantly conceived and skillfully executed.

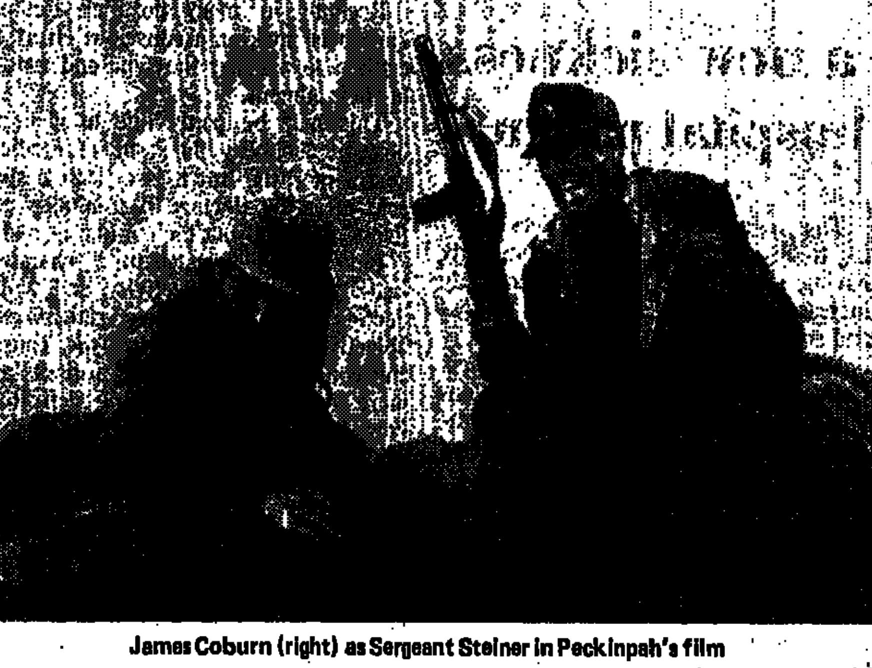
Producer Wolf C. Hartwig earned the money for this film by his ten-part series *Schulmädchen Report* (Schoolgilrs Report) – an exposé of sex among schoolgirls.

Steiner – das Eiserne Kreuz is based on the best-seller novel *Das Geduldige Fleisch* (The Patient Flesh) and with it the producer is hoping for a box office hit. And so that this anticipated success should not be restricted to this country alone, Hartwig hired the American Sam Peckinpah as director. The cast includes Hollywood stars James Coburn and James Mason, and German actors Maximilian Schell, Klaus Löwitsch and Senta Berger.

After 100 days of shooting in Yugoslavia, the original five million deutschmarks earmarked for the production had trebled. The British EMI concern participated with a 30 per cent share. The film was this country's most expensive post-war production.

The story of the experienced combat soldier, Sergeant Steiner, whose platoon finds itself behind enemy lines on the Russian Front in 1943, is a typical Peckinpah story – a story of defeat. Sergeant Steiner is played by James Coburn.

The defeat is all-encompassing. It is the defeat of the German Wehrmacht in Russia, of the ambitious and aristocratic Prussian officer (Schell) who is determined to get the Iron Cross at any cost and of the soldiers who go through a hell of steel and blood and who know but one thought – survival.



James Coburn (right) as Sergeant Steiner in Peckinpah's film

(Photo: Constantin)

Sergeant Steiner has a great deal in common with other Peckinpah heroes such as Cable Hogue, Billy the Kid and Junior Bonner. Steiner, too, becomes an outsider in his striving for individual independence.

He becomes a pawn in the hands of those in authority who turn concepts such as freedom into a farce. Steiner is in conflict with his colonel (Mason) in just the same way as with the emotions which can no longer be controlled.

Steiner, too, becomes a victim of war's senseless, mechanical killing. He can no longer cope with the peaceful environment of a hospital, fails to give in to the titillation of an attractive and sympathetic nurse (Senta Berger) and goes back to his men. Only once does Steiner show any emotional commitment: when he fells a German officer with a burst of bullets from his machine gun.

As in "The Wild Bunch" (1969), Peckinpah is obsessed and fascinated by the moments of extreme and deadly violence which he extends and stylises by slow-motion shots as in scenes depicting bodies that are riddled by bullets sinking to the ground or, torn to pieces by shrapnel, sailing through the air.

All this conveys Man's longing for death and Nirvana. Steiner and his men are the losers in a lost world.

Although Peckinpah does not attempt to convey a soldier's legend in his brilliant anti-war film, this box office production nevertheless fails to convince … perhaps because James Coburn does not have the tragic aura of a Steve McQueen in „Junior Bonner" or a Kris Kristofferson in "Billy the Kid" or a Warren Oates in "Bring me the Head of Alfredo Garcia" … or perhaps because the Indian half-blood Peckinpah felt uprooted in Germany.

War specatcles are said to be fashionable once more, and success or failure of *Steiner – das Eiserne Kreuz* will prove whether moviegoers, too, feel that way. It remains to be seen whether this attempt to capture the international audience will prove to be the right recipe.

Rolf Thissen

(Kölner Stadt-Anzeiger, 29 January 1977)

Top directors discuss state of film industry

The Federal Republic's two most prominent film directors, Werner Herzog und Wim Wenders recently gave their views on the state of this country's film industry at a special discussion organised by Düsseldorf's Film Forum.

The discussion was chaired by Laurens Straub, who was instrumental in promoting the renaissance of the "new German film" under the aegis of the *Filmverlag der Autoren* (Author's Film Publishing House).

Although no films were shown at this function, it was nevertheless attended by 600 people who came to familiarise themselves with the attitudes of film-makers towards their own work and the public at large.

Straub depicted a pessimistic panorama, saying that, in view of the dramatic drop in cinema attendance, foreign distribution practices and resistance on the part of the domestic cinema business, the German film could disappear overnight, so to speak, as did the Polish film miracle.

This could only be prevented, Straub went on to say, if our film industry were to abandon its concept of mass entertainment and devote itself entirely to entertaining specialised minority groups of connoisseurs with whom the director is familiar.

This call for a withdrawal into films for such small minority groups might be a suitable means for combatting American film distributors, but to celebrate the film as the "Queen of the Media" can only be likened to desperate jubilation in the midst of an act of emasculation.

Werner Herzog provided a clearer picture of the acute threat to the film industry, and gave as his recipe a radical reduction of costs. He considers a Super 8 film perfectly feasible if the film industry should continue to be boycotted by official financing committees.

These committees felt they were on safe ground promoting films adapted from novels by Hans Habe or Ludwig Ganghofer. But what they considered their trump card, namely the employment of foreign directors such as Bergman or Peckinpah, was nothing but a sign of insecurity, he said.

Werner Herzog considers himself entitled to speak on the state of this country's film industry due to the accolade and the blessing his work received by the Paris film historian Lotte Eisner and also due to the surprising self-assurance with which he took up the legacy of Heinrich Kleist and Franz Kafka,

Writers might mock his claim to this legacy, but the German film is well within its bounds in reasserting its tradition. But even so, following the accolade he received in Paris, Herzog is virtually forced to fulfil the expectation pinned on him: "You must become a Murnau!"

Herzog announced that *Nosferatu* would be his next film.

Wim Wenders, on the other hand, maintained that his way of telling a story was extremely costly. Now that he has embarked on the venture of making *Regel ohne Ausnahme* (Rule Without Exception) in a Paris studio he has been forced to make this film as a co-production and thus abandon his hitherto lax attitude towards budgotary exigencies.

Wenders went on to say that the German film needs pleasure and confidence which must mature along with its public.

But we know that the abolition of tradition within the film industry, which mistrusts German productions, has destroyed this confidence in the older generation. People went to the cinema to see stories – stories that could apply to any of them.

Wenders also said that the distaste for

Continued on page 12

IN BRIEF

Circulation of dailies down slightly

There was a seasonal drop in the overall circulation of West German dailies in the fourth quarter of 1976.

According to the independent circulation control of the press, there were a total of 22.5 million copies sold in the fourth quarter as compared with 22.7 million in the third quarter.

Where national dailies are concerned, the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* still leads with 304,729 sold copies, closely followed by the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* with 293,885 copies and *Die Welt* with 218,783 copies.

Compared with the same period in 1975, the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* showed an increase of 10,801 and the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* of 6,135 copies, while *Die Welt* dropped by 786 copies.

(Süddeutsche Zeitung, 22 January 1977)

Magazine dealing with Soviet research folds

The publishers *Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt* (DVA), Stuttgart, discontinued the publication of their monthly magazine *Exakt* as of 31 December 1976.

The magazine's aim was to familiarise this country's readers with science and technology in the Soviet Union.

A spokesman for VDA said that the magazine was discontinued because it was unprofitable, the circulation of the last issue having dropped to 500 copies.

Exakt was first published in July 1974 with a circulation of 10,000 copies. This "exclusive information from Soviet science, research and technology" was intended as a discussion forum for Soviet and West German scientists. The German editorial office consisted of DVA staff members while the Moscow office was staffed by editors of the Soviet news agency *Novosti*. *dpa*

(Hannoversche Allgemeine, 13 January 1977)

New magazine for literature and arts

This country's magazine market will be augmented by a new publication as of next September. The publishing house *Beltz Verlag* (Weinheim/Basel) will be publishing *Rogner's Magazin* with an intial circulation of 30,000 copies. Editor-in-chief will be Klaus P. Rogner.

Roughly half of the magazine will be devoted to literature, the other half being devoted to theatre, film, art, society and politics as well as recreation. *dpa*

(Hannoversche Allgemeine, 21 January 1977)

Philosophers to meet in Düsseldorf

For the first time in seventy years, the World Congress of Philosophy will once more take place in Germany.

Heidelberg was the venue in 1908, and Düsseldorf is listed as the venue for the congress due to take place from 27 August to 2 September 1978.

The *leitmotiv* of the congress will be "Philosophy and the *Weltanschauung* of Modern Science." *dpa*

(Die Welt, 22 January 1977)

■ HEALTH

Doctors discover a new sickness syndrome among hospital patients

DIE WELT

Psychic hospitalism is the name medical research scientists in Ulm and Hanover have given to a newly discovered sickness syndrome. It is the result of the accumulated psychological side effects of being helplessly "delivered up" to the whole hospital machinery. It is the psychiatric counterpart to somatic hospitalism, an infection contracted within a hospital.

Adult men and women, particularly resolute and capable business people, suddenly feel themselves reduced to the status of a child. Instead of being able to decide freely over what they or others beneath them are going to do, they find they are suddenly subject to the whims and orders of and an inspection by other people on being carted into hospital.

Hospital staff decide from then on what will happen to them, where and with whom they will be put. The result is a mixture of bewilderment and helpless frustration.

Jürgen Rohde, medical sociologist at the Hanover Medical College, noticed some time ago that a patient is more or less treated as a child in hospital. He also noticed that many patients correspondingly start behaving like small children after a short time.

Doctors and other medical staff say they have never been particularly aware of this. On the contrary, they say most patients adjust quickly to hospital routine without any show of resistance, temper or other emotion.

Dr Rohde, however, says that patients do not adjust as such. They capitulate and give way to constant mild depression. Beneath the resigned exterior the patient is in fact making an immense effort to supppress his feelings and submit to "doctor's orders."

So in fact being admitted to hospital puts a far greater emotional strain on the patient at a time when he is least able to cope with it than any other unusual or upsetting events in his life.

Lack of communication in hispital is an even worse aspect of hospital life for most patients, according to Fritz Hartmann, also of Hanover. He says that hospital staff speak in a recondite jargon of their own which may often lead to misunderstandings between patient and staff.

This medical terminology does nothing to allay patients' fears and constantly having to ask what doctors mean only increases their feeling of helplessness and subjection.

When doctors of the Hanover Medical College became aware of this problem they thought at first that they had simply forgotten how to talk in laymen's terms. They thought — mistakenly — that sisters and nurses probably established a far better relationship with patients than doctors could.

But, on the contrary, nurses and sisters even seem to go out of their way to use learned medical terminology and abbreviations in order to assert themselves over patients.

At Ulm university hospital all hospital staff are now being trained in the correct way of dealing with patients by Dr Karl Köhle, He is concentrating mainly on schooling hospital staff to be more sensitive and sympathtic towards patients' wishes, worries and fears.

Recently in many hospitals doctors have been making a conscious effort to explain to patients the type and nature of their ailment.

This may be partly due to changes brought about by the issue of medical treatment costs. But it is at least a sincere effort by doctors to minimise patients' fears and put their minds at rest.

But psychic hospitalism is charaterised by extreme subjectivity, and while doctors can at best give patients an objective run-down on the type, causes and course of their illnesses, patients are more interested in knowing definitely how things will turn out.

Unfortunately this is where patients ask too much. Doctors are not trained in clairvoyancy and can give patients no infallible answers.

In effect, all the patient can do is resign himself to trusting in medical progress and the skill of his doctors. And for their part, sisters and nurses, who are best able to help patients overcome psychic hospitalism, can do no better than offer them all the sympathy and encouragement they can.

Herbert L. Schrader

(Die Welt, 27 January 1977)

Cancer research still in its infancy, Bonn conference told

Cancer research has not yet got past its infancy", according to Los Angeles cancer research scientist Professor Ch. Heidelberger. His view is also shared by twenty other well-known cancer research experts from Europe, the USA, Australia and Israel who met recently at a conference in Bonn.

The main purpose of the conference was to take stock of progress in cancer research, according to Bonn cancer expert Professor Heinz Breuer. The conference was arranged by the Cancer Research Foundation at the suggestion of Dr Mildred Scheel, founder of the Federal Cancer Aid Association.

It was hoped that this unique project would provide some guidelines for further more efficient cancer research in this country and ways in which this can best be promoted.

Professor Breuer said it had become clear that more research must be carried out into cell differentiation, immunology, virus research, experimental chemotherapy, basic clinical principles and controlled clinical experiments.

American researchers particularly stressed the necessity for more international cooperation in researching causes of cancer and ways of treating the disease. They were, they said, particularly interested in working more closely with doctors in this country.

Dr A. Goldin of the National Cancer Research Institute in Bethesda, Maryland, advocated working out international programmes for research into the development of drugs for retarding the growth of malignant tumours.

All participants at the conference agreed that more spontaneity, individuality and freedom was necessary in cancer research, particularly among younger scientists, if better progress is to be made in future.

The laborious progress of cancer research was illustrated by Milan expert Professor U. Veronesi, who said that approximately eight hundred clinical tests will result in about 150 publications, from which, in turn, there would be only about twenty actual improvements in treating cancer.

(Nordwest Zeitung, 25 January 1977)

Don't use TV as a baby-sitter, parents warned

Television is a popular, but unhealthy "baby-sitter". Nervousness, insomnia, listlessness, mental sluggishness, lack of concentration, eyesight problems, headaches and aggressiveness are often the result when children watch too much TV, says the Stuttgart Institute for Health Education.

Doctors and psychologists are becoming increasingly concerned at the number of children who are unable to keep play and reality apart in their lives, and the physical and psychological side effects of a continual overdose of television.

Many parents allow their children to watch an inordinate amount of television simply for convenience' sake. Experts believe that children should not watch more than one hour's television per day, and then only children's programmes.

The Stuttgart study is backed up by a media research survey carried out by ARD, this country's first television channel.

This study reveals that five per cent of three- to seven-year olds and as many as fifteen per cent of eight- to thirteen-year olds regularly watch violent detective films and programmes intended for adults.

Small though these percentages may be, ARD stresses that they are large enough to give real cause for alarm.

Every fifth child aged eight to nine years eats his evening meal while watching TV. The ARD team said it was particularly unwise of parents to leave their children to watch programmes alone.

The Health Education Institute survey also comments that parents should make a point of talking over what the children have seen and heard with them at the end of the programme.

Experts are furthermore greatly alarmed at the number of advertisements which children presumably watch which foster false illusions.

ARD says it has found little public response to advice it has given as to the correct amount of TV for children. Psychologists say that unless parents take a firm stand children will continue to prefer watching television to playing because they believe this to be "grown up."

dpa

(Die Welt, 25 January 1977)

Continued from page 11

films set in today's world was rooted in the fear of being confronted with German myths.

And yet, as Herzog pointed out, Wenders' films are myth-forming as in the case of *Im Laufe der Zeit* (In the Course of Time) or *Herz aus Glas* (Heart of Glass) inasmuch as they depict the romantic myth of the lone journey to confront life's adversities. At the same time, however, film-makers such as Kluge or Schlöndorff dismantle myths.

Wenders and Herzog fear that they might fall prey to the technocrats of the film industry, and that the cinema, as the place where Utopia comes true, might disappear.

(Frankfurter Rundschau, 28 January 1977)

Mentally retarded get a cafe of their own in Frankfurt

The mentally retarded in Frankfurt now have a cafe of their own. Opened on 1 February, it is the only one of its kind in this country and probably even in the whole world. It is open not only to mentally handicapped people, but also to anyone else who happens to be passing.

Cafes for various minority groups — such as billiards or chess players — have been in existence for some time. They provide people with common interests and problems with a centre where they can socialise and relax together.

Now the mentally retarded are to have the same chance to mix socially, as Frankfurt mayor, Martin Berg — also chairman of the society for welfare homes — pointed out.

This society started a chain of rehabilitation centres for the mentally handicapped last year. The new cafe is the latest link.

"A cafe of this sort has been conspicuously lacking for some time", says Herr Berg. He bought the *Tulpencafe* (The Tulip Cafe) for the society when it came up for sale last year. It was taken over complete with name, fittings and furnishings.

"We want to keep the genial cafe atmosphere so that the mentally handicapped people can have as normal a contact as possible to the 'real world'," says Herr Berg.

The affiliated workshop next door offers the mentally handicapped a further opportunity to have normal contact with society. There the public can see handicapped people painting and glazing pottery.

Pieces of pottery, some of which are made at other workshops are on show and may be bought. Fifty per cent of the proceeds goes to the mentally handicapped themselves. The other half goes towards the upkeep of the workshop.

The Tulip Cafe is also for mentally handicapped people who are not under care in one of the society's homes. In the cafe they not only have the chance to chat normally to others, they can also ask the supervisory staff there for advice on any problems they may have.

Herr Berg commented, "We are hoping that the mentally handicapped people who come to the cafe will appreciate and benefit from its relaxed atmosphere and that they will not hesitate to ask for help or advice whenever they need it."

Albert Bechtold

(Stuttgarter Nachrichten, 22 January 1977)

■ OUR WORLD

Blind man gets top Civil Service post

Heinrich Behne, a 44-year top-ranking civil servant who has been blind since birth has been made the new director of the Verden/Aller welfare office by Lower Saxony Minister of Social Affairs, Hermann Schnipkoweit.

It is the first time in the Federal Republic that a completely blind person has managed to rise to such a position of official responsibility. Herr Behne has 157 employees in his charge, is responsible for about 40,000 war victims and their dependents and a further 16,000 disabled people in nine districts of Lower Saxony as well as Cuxhaven and Stade.

Frankfurter **Neue Presse**

Herr Behne is the oldest son of a farming family which owned approximately 192 acres of land near Gifhorn. As a small child Herr Behne was able to distinguish light and dark, but has since become completely blind.

With infinite determination, strength and energy, aided by the patience and help of his family and teachers, he has gradually worked his way up to his present position.

He went to a school for the blind in Hanover and later a college for the blind in Marburg where he passed examinations which enabled him to study law.

Having finished his studies and completed a period as junior barrister at the Celle provincial court he was given a post in the Verden Welfare Office, one of the six in Lower Saxony.

He now lives in a suburb of Verden with his wife, Helga, a nurse whom he met while still a student.

Every day she drives him to the office, where he is able to find his way around with amazing ease and confidence. "In Marburg I learned to listen in order to avoid walls, cupboards and other obstacles before I hit them," he says. "Blind people have to learn to make particularly good use of their other senses."

In his office Herr Behne is helped by Lisa Klenke, who has worked in the welfare office for 23 years. She reads him the cases that come up and helps him sign documents.

"The atmosphere is remarkably good here," says Herr Behne. "My staff supplied me with all the internal information I need for running the place".



Heinrich Behne with his secretary Frau Lisa Klenke (Photo: Karl-Heinz Kallenbach)

At home Herr Behne listens to taped versions of the daily newspapers and magazines or other political and scientific programmes for the blind.

He also keeps up to date with the latest developments in the law, particularly where it concerns social affairs, by a constant supply of legal journals either in Braille or on tape.

There are a number of printing firms which now specialise in publishing material for the blind. These publications are available on the market almost simultaneously with normal printed material.

Asked what hobbies a blind man can have, Herr Behne scarcely knows where to begin. "There are more than I could possibly ever get round to trying out," he says.

"I very much enjoy going for walks with my wife. And on Thursdays I take part in sport for the disabled. I like listening to the radio, too, particularly to classical music broadcasts."

Karl-Heinz Kallenbach

(Frankfurter Neue Presse, 29 January 1977)

Neurologist gave patient 2,000 'shots', court told

KielerNachrichten

A neurologist and psychiatrist is standing trial in Frankfurt charged with inflicting grievous bodily harm and with attempted fraud.

The 51-year old doctor is accused of having given a patient at least 2,000 injections and infusions and of having dispensed "half a chemist's shop" to him during a course of treatment lasting sixteen months between 1971 and 1972, during which time he charged the patient fees amounting to 143,000 deutschmarks.

In addition to this the 47-year old patient had to pay a further 30,000 deutschmarks to cover prescriptions filled out for him by the doctor.

During preliminary proceedings several medical specialists attested that the accused had carried out "a pointless and superfluous" course of treatment. Following a road accident the patient was suffering from mental shock, but far from helping him the doctor had permanently damaged his health by the course of treatment he had given him.

Another expert opinion, stating that because the patient had been given to many drugs he was now suffering from a so-called Horner Syndrome and grave circulation disorders, has given rise to the charge of grievous bodily harm.

In the course of treatment the patient's inherited private means shrunk rapidly. Finally he was forced to sell his car in order to keep pace with the continually increasing pile of doctor's bills. Then, having paid him one hundred thousand deutschmarks, his patience ran out

The doctor has pleaded not guilty to all charges. He admits the treatment he gave was unusual, but claims it was appropriate to the patient's complaints. He regards the suit as a neurotic act of vengeance on the patient's part because he was not prepared to give medical attestation that the patient's illness was a direct result of the road accident which would have made the patient eligible for compensation from an insurance company.

dpa

(Kieler Nachrichten, 27 January 1977)

Most squabbles occur in the living-room

Living rooms and bathrooms are this country's "favourite" scenes of family quarrels. Thirteen per cent of the population quarrel with members of their family at least once a week in the living room — generally over TV programmes — and nine per cent in the bathroom.

This is the result of a survey carried out between June and October last year by the Offenbach research Institute for the family magazine *Schöner Wohnen*.

Two thousand people over the age of fourteen were asked how they liked their homes and what they disliked about them.

Nearly every third person complained that they had only one bathroom. Every third wanted central heating and the heart's desire of every fifth person was a balcony, a terrace or a garden.

Many felt their houses and flats were badly situated. Twenty-nine per cent complained it was too far to travel to places of entertainment. Twenty per cent wanted to be nearer the centre of town and 20 per cent wanted to live nearer their work.

Noise from the street got on 26 per cent of the interviewees' nerves, but only three per cent were bothered by neighbours' pets or unfriendly landlords.

And forty-one per cent had no complaints whatever.

But the Offenbach Institute claims that how content people are depends on how long they have been living in the same place. After five or ten years people are most apt to grumble. After fifteen years they are apparently quite happy with their lot.

Young people and workers are least satisfied with their homes. People with high incomes who live in new flats and houses are the most contented.

The research institute was, however, unable to solve the bathroom riddle. The higher the household income, the more liable people are to squabble over the use of the bath.

(Die Welt, 1 February 1977)

Courtesy course for postal clerks

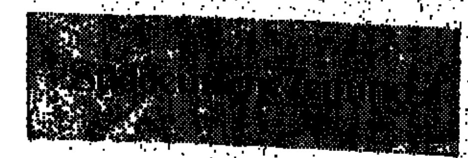
The Federal Post Office has started a "courtesy-training scheme" for its employees behind the counter. This was deemed necessary since innumerable complaints were coming in of desk clerks being unhelpful, short-tempered and brusque with customers.

"By the time they've finished their tea-break the new postal rates will have been brought in" is the typical joke heard every day in post offices from irate customers. But post office authorities are hoping that such irascible comments will soon no longer be justified.

The courses have now been running successfully for five months. They are intended to supply the 28,000 employees behind P.O. counters with a few hints on how to deal a little more deftly with customers who are either forgetful, peevish or in a hurry.

One hundred industrial psychologists have been brought in to give three-day courses to post office employees. These include a few psychological tips which will at least make life behind the counter a little easier.

Insolence and arrogance, they are told, only make things worse for both customer and P.O. official. Amusing films are used to show them how impolite it can seem when they read newspapers or smoke on duty. They are also taught to



be more helpful to foreigners and disabled people. Basically the message is that courtesy and friendliness are the best policy.

The course includes basic principles of teaching and psychology, and employees are given a special text book for further reference.

Course participants take active part in their courses by enacting short scenes in which a post office official attempts to deal with an ill-tempered customer. The scene is filmed and the video-tape played back to the class and discussed.

The aim of this is to teach the desk clerks to adopt a better attitude towards customers and to give information readily and reliably. As the Post Office points out, the course is more than a mere lecture to post office employees to mind their manners.

Ninety-five per cent of the 5,000 odd P.O. employees who have completed the course so far have since been far better able to cope with difficult customers.

After this encouraging start the Post Office is now considering giving its 11,000 postmen a similar training course. The Post Office is hoping this project will drastically reduce the number of customers' complaints.

What is more, by improving the quality of its service and the reliability of its advice to citizens the Post Office believes that it will gain an edge on other possible competitors.

Last but by no means least the Post Office also wants its employees to be happy. And the are more likely to be contented if they can cope with impatient customers.

(Süddeutsche Zeitung, 28 January 1977)

■ SPORT

Ace skater Dagmar Lurz, the girl with an iron will



Dagmar Lurz took her place at the victory ceremony as gingerly as though she might lose her footing and wake up to find it was all a dream.

There she was in Helsinki, runner-up to Anett Pötzsch of the GDR in the European figure skating championships, but one step higher up the pedestal than bronze medallist Susanna Driano of Italy.

Eighteen-year old Dagmar, a steel worker's daughter from Dortmund, stood there clasping a bouquet of roses and sporting a sash and silver medal.

This cameo was the crowning achievement so far of fourteen years of training and roughly 100,000 deutschmarks invested in coaching, rink fees and ballet lessons.

Now, at last, she was the winner of a medal at the European championships and stood a chance of faring even better at the 1980 Olympics.

Dagmar Lurz, who will inevitably be billed as a Cinderella from the dark, satanic mills of the Ruhr (the last place in the world anyone would associate with the ethereal charm of the ice rink), is a changed girl.

Prior to the national championships in January she was just an eighteen-year old schoolgirl, quiet and reserved.

Then she won the national championship title and the oyster shell began to open, revealing the pearl within. A new Dagmar emerged, quick-witted and bright as a new pin.

"I wouldn't even recognise myself any longer", she admitted in Helsinki after coming second at the half-way mark and beginning to feel she stood a chance of winning a European championship medal.

"Just imagine, runner-up at the European championships!" she said an hour after the award ceremony.

She was not cool, calm and collected as old hands at winning honours of this kind tend to be. She was just an eighteen-year-old girl who was overwhelmed by the good fortune that had come her way.

"I would have been just as thrilled to win a bronze medal," Dagmar Lurz admitted.

Yet her career on ice seemd to have been brought to an abrupt and unhappy end one dark November day in 1973 when she was rushed to hospital from the scene of a car crash with a broken pelvis and an assortment of other broken bones.

Ice-skating seemed to have seen the last of a promising youngster whose career had been nipped in the bud. Yet early the next summer she was back in the rink.

"I had to start from scratch," she says. "Even eight-year-old girls could skate rings round me."

A trait of character to which she smilingly admits came to her assistance. Dagmar Lurz is as stubborn as a mule and not a girl to give up in a hurry.

What is more, her parents Karl-Heinz and Marga were determined that their girl would have a better start to life than theirs had been.

Four years ago, while she was starting again from scratch, she met Hans-Jürgen Bäumler, the ice-skating star of the sixties whose name is still synonymous with the glamour of the ice rink to most people in this country.

"If you succeed in making the grade, Dagmar," he said, "you will really be a star." So she did and so she is.

Has it all been worthwhile? National coach Erich Zeller has this to say: „Dagmar is mad keen on skating. Last year she went on a real holiday for the first time in her life, to Chiemsee in Bavaria. But a week later she came over to Garmisch-Partenkirchen for training."

Dagmar herself says: "I have been in training since the age of four. One day is very much like another and you get used to the routine. Mind you, if you ever stop and wonder whether it is worth the effort… well, it certainly makes you think!"

She no longer needs to do so. She is the first girl from this country to win a European championship medal for 23 years, and the Federal Republic ranked third only to the Soviet Union and the GDR in the team ratings at Helsinki.

(Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung für Deutschland, 31 January 1977)



Dagmar Lurz with a bouquet after her Helsinki success, and in action during the competition (Photos: Sven Simon)

Hooligans still a major peril on the ski slopes

Seventy thousand skiing accidents occurred in this country in the 1975/76 season, according to the Federal Republic Skiing Association (DSV). Nearly all the victims spent some time either in hospital or undergoing medical treatment.

Collisions with other skiers on the slopes rank third in the list of accident categories.

In Austria, where more accidents occur on the slopes in a season's skiing than on the roads in the course of an entire year, collisions head the list of accident causes.

Why? Well, obviously the slopes are overcrowed — so much so that it is hard to avoid getting in other people's way now and again.

But two other factors also make a major contribution towards the plaster cast that is so often the memento winter sports fans bring home from skiing holidays.

They are the bad habits of unscrupulous skiers who ski dangerously, jeopardising both their own lives and those of others, and the plain ignorance of the vast majority of skiers.

For more than a decade the International Skiing Federation (FIS) has proclaimed a highway code for skiers, but no more than a handful of the million skiers in this country are conversant with it.

One of the rules, for instance, is that it is up to the skier coming downhill, to keep an eye on what is going on down below (and not vice-versa).

Copies of this code are prominently displayed on many ski lift and cable railway noticeboards. They are even distributed in leaflet from to individual skiers.

The FIS code is acknowledged by courts not only in this country, but also in France, Italy, Austria and Switzerland as a valid basis for legal rulings.

The skiers' code is nowhere incorporated in the statute book, however, and what is more, there is no one to enforce it on the slopes.

Hooligans on skis can terrorise their fellow-skiers without fear of punishment until such time as they themselves are involved in an accident.

Plans are now afoot to change this state of affairs, at least on cable railways and a number of ski lifts. In conjunction with the DSV railway authorities are drafting new regulations that will empower railway officials to confiscate offenders' ski lift tickets summarily and without restitution.

Railway staff will nonetheless remain powerless to act in cases where skiers overstep the mark on the slopes, which is why there have been demands for a special police force for years.

The Bavarian Interior Ministry, which is responsible for this country's Alps, has no intention of setting up any such force.

Offenders are liable to fines ranging from five to 1,000 deutschmarks, and the local authorities are entitled to impose fines in accordance with comparable road traffic offences.

Hit-and-run skiers and skiers who fail to stop and help acciden victims are thus liable to fines corresponding to those imposed on similar offenders on concrete or asphalt.

Yet fines are seldom imposed, the reason being that, apart from a handful of off-duty policemen and the mountain rescue patrolmen, no one has so far been bothered to assume responsibility for doing anything about hooliganism on skis.

Barbara Hartl

(Die Zeit, 4 February 1977)

Police seminar on ways to stop soccer thugs

Soccer violence in this country may not yet have led to a clamour for the reintroduction of corporal punishment, as in Britain, but harder times certain lie ahead for football "aggro".

Hermann Neuberger, president of the DFB, the Federal Republic's Football Association, recently called for assistence in dealing with soccer hooligans, and Interior and Justice Ministers, police and public prosecutors are only too willing to oblige.

At Hiltrup police college, near Münster, a four-day seminar on controlling soccer violence was recently held for police officers from cities with Federal league football clubs.

The problem is *certainly* assuming alarming proportions. Only recently young soccer fans under the influence of drink went on the rampage in both Brunswick and Frankfurt.

In Duisburg law enforcement officers already work in close conjunction as envisaged at Hiltrup. At MSV Duisburg's home fixture public prosecutor Bernd Metzler, 34, is always at the ready.

"Rowdies must be brought to task immediately," Metzler explains. "Summary judggment must be passed,' like a box on the ears.

"Prompt action is the only effective way to counteract soccer thugs. They are youngsters for the most part and need to be taught a swift lesson."

Duisburg offenders are also banned from attending subsequent fixtures, for which purpose records are compiled and mobile ID check vans employed.

Public prosecutor Bernd Metzler knows what he is talking about, having been at the receiving end of soccer hooliganism himself. "I was given a good hiding myself last November," he explains.

When he warned them that he was a public prosecutor they merely laughed and put in the boot.

Metzler is determined to lay soccer violence by the heels. "We must neither succumb to resignation nor allow matters to drift; no avenue of putting an end to violence must be left unexplored."

He sincerely hopes that the Hiltrup police seminar will help to set matters right.

Franz-Josef Gribs/sid

(Kölner Stadt-Anzeiger, 1 February 1977)